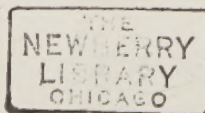


THE
UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

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ARCHDEACON OF CHICHESTER.

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PART I.

THE HISTORY AND EXPOSITION OF THE
DOCTRINE OF CATHOLIC UNITY.

THE
UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

ST. AUGUSTINE, in his book concerning the instruction of persons ignorant of the Christian doctrine, after giving rules for the guidance of the teacher, adds, "but if the catechumen be slow of understanding, and have neither hearing nor heart for the sweetness of truth, he must be borne with tenderly, and, after a short and cursory statement of other points, those things which are chiefly necessary are to be inculcated with much of awe, such as the Unity of the Catholic Church, the nature of temptation, and of the Christian life by reason of the judgment to come."¹ To hear the Unity of the Church thus numbered among the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, will sound strange to modern ears; and by this we may measure how remote

¹ S. Aug. de Catechiz. Rudibus. c. xiii.

are our habits of thought from the tone of Catholic belief. Moreover, St. Augustine does not treat the doctrine of unity as a first principle only, but as an elementary or axiomatic truth among the first principles of faith. It is to be taught to all catechumens, even to the least intelligent of them : being, in fact, both an object of faith and a rule of life, without which no man can become a Catholic Christian. Whatsoever any man may safely either not know at all, or know but in part, this at least he must know thoroughly, and believe without a doubt.

The reasons of this necessity are many and obvious ; and it will not be amiss to touch on one or two, that we may form some juster estimate of the great importance of the subject on which we are about to enter.

1. First, then, the doctrine of the Unity of the Church is most necessary to be known and believed, as an object of faith, by all Christians, because it is in the One Church alone that there is a revealed way of salvation in the Name of Christ. It is not requisite, in this place, to do more than affirm this doctrine. Its meaning, limits, and application we shall consider hereafter. It is enough only to refer to it ; for all Christians agree in believing that there is such a doctrine in the Gospel : they differ only in expounding the nature and in fixing the limits of the one Church in which alone salvation is revealed to man. Whatsoever, then, be the doctrine of salvation in the Church only, it

is plainly so related to the doctrine of the Unity or Oneness of the Church itself, as to render a right understanding of the nature of the Church, *i. e.* what, and where it is, highly necessary to all men who are seeking salvation through Jesus Christ. For if they do not know what, nor where the Church is, how shall they partake of the salvation which is enshrined in it? And if they do not know the nature and limits of the Church, how, even after finding it, shall they be assured that they still abide in the way of life? And this brings us to another reason.

2. Secondly, the Unity of the Church is most necessary to be understood and acted on as a rule of life by all Christians, because it is a principle of moral obligation.

(1) In the first place, it is the correlative of schism, and a safeguard against it. By a right knowledge of unity Catholic Christians know also the nature and forms of schism. It is evident that without this knowledge they may, and we daily see that they do, countenance, partake in, and even themselves originate, acts which are materially schismatical,—such, for instance, as aiding in the propagation of sectarian bodies, consenting to be present at acts of worship, or teaching, without the pale of the Church, and the like. It matters not, in this view of the case, what be the true doctrine of unity and of schism: because that there are such realities in the Christian scheme, and that unity is

a duty and schism a sin, all Christians agree in believing. It is as necessary, therefore, to know their true nature and definition, as it is to know the limits of truth and falsehood, and the boundary lines of good and evil. It is, in fact, a matter of revealed obligation, and a particular form of Christian ethics.

(2) Again, a right knowledge of the nature of Unity is necessary, not only as a safeguard against schism, but as a guide in the whole complicated texture of a Christian man's life. It enters into every function and act of the Church around him: it is in her teaching, her worship, her sacraments, her ceremonies, her discipline, her penitential order, her censures, her absolutions: it runs through his private life, in all acts of domestic religion, in all the conduct, and temper, and conversation of a Catholic Christian: it besets him behind and before, and lays its hand upon him in all his relations to his brethren, to his pastor, to his Lord: it is a governing rule of his moral choice, teaching him what to do and what to forbear, what to testify and what to hold in silence: it is the outward index, and the unerring means of "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and thereby of his perfection in the likeness of Christ.

Now these are some among many reasons which might be brought to show the necessity of delivering to all catechumens the doctrine of Catholic Unity. There are also two remarks I would make on the

present condition of the Church of Christ, which will the more strongly impress on us the duty of faithfully instructing our people in this great rule of life.

And first it must be remembered that this doctrine, which, in the time of St. Augustine, was definite and undoubted, is now perplexed and gainsaid. In his day the nature of unity was admitted: the only dispute, as with the Donatists, turned on the question, which of two contending bodies was indeed the one true Church. How many and various soever were the sects by which the Church was then beset, she yet had within a clear and sustained consciousness of her own unity, of which consciousness she carefully made all her members to partake. They carried with them, as it were, a talisman which kept them from wandering into the conventicles of schism. We, in these latter times, are beset by no fewer schisms than they were of old. The state of the Western Church for the last three hundred years, our familiar intercourse with Christians in a state of open schism, the visible moral excellence of many born and reared in separation, the deadening effect of political changes, the wayward partizanship of men in the communion of the Church, a habit of indifference, laxity, and spurious charity, which, like a hidden stream, undermines the steadfastness of principle,—all these have so combined to lower the standard of teaching and thought among us, that we no longer impress

upon our catechumens any definite or intelligible idea of the Unity of the Church, *i. e.* what it is, wherein it consists, and how it makes us responsible for our moral acts. We have come to look upon the doctrine of Unity as a part of the *theologia armata*,—as a weapon of offence. We shrink from teaching it, lest we should seem to condemn those who are visibly in schism; and thus, for the sins of Christendom, it has come to pass that what was ordained unto life is found to be unto death; and men, by striving to and fro to establish their conflicting theories, are divided in the very article of unity. Or, on the other hand, the false charity of being silent more embroils the fray; so that, if we, to whom the only word that can still the storm has been imparted, shall refuse to speak it, what do we do?—what reckoning shall we give to Him that bequeathed His peace unto us? No sober man can doubt that one chief cause of the continuance of schism, and therefore of perplexity and error, among our people, is our slackness in expounding to them faithfully the articles of their baptismal creed. If the pastors of the flock should slur over the article of the Incarnation of our Lord as they have slurred over that of the Unity of the Church, her people would have been long since heretical. The low tone of teaching now prevalent on this doctrine is one reason to enforce the duty of bestowing much anxious thought and care in restoring some true and effectual mode of inculcating it upon our catechumens.

The other remark I would venture to make is on the defective state of our catechetical formularies in respect to this doctrine. In our Prayer-book it is everywhere assumed that the people are duly taught in the nature of the one Church: as for instance, in the Prayer for all sorts and conditions of men, in the Collects for the Feasts of St. Simon and St. Jude, and of All Saints; in the service for the Visitation of the Sick, where we pray that God may "preserve and continue this sick member in the unity of the Church;" and also in the Litany, where the people are taught to pray for deliverance from the sin of schism. It is therefore evident that a knowledge of the nature of unity is pre-supposed: and without doubt, when these services were published in the vulgar tongue, the context of the Church's oral teaching filled up all that was needful for the right understanding of them. But, with submission to those to whose hands the disposal of such things is intrusted, I would venture to adopt, as my own, the wish of a layman whose name will be its own sanction. "If ever a convocation should think fit to revise the catechism of the Church, to whose authority and judgment an affair of that nature ought to be entirely submitted, it is possible they may find it necessary to add some questions concerning those who have the power of administering sacraments, and how they receive such an authority, and what duties are owing by God's word to our spiritual guides: because such sort of instruc-

tions, early instilled into tender minds, might in the next generation retrieve that respect to the sacred order which we so scandalously want in this; and they would have this further advantage, that they would be a means of keeping men steadfast to the communion of the Church, and of preserving them from falling into schisms, even in a state of persecution; from the possibility of which no human establishment can secure the Church of God, while she is militant here on earth. And till this can be effected, it is to be wished the reverend clergy would more frequently instruct the people in such duties. The want of which necessary knowledge makes the principles of Church communion so little understood, that men are 'tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive.' I am very sensible great modesty hath prevailed upon them to divert their thoughts from this subject, lest it should be interpreted a preaching up themselves; but the same fears may as well prevent parents from instructing their children, and masters their servants, in those duties that relate to themselves . . ."¹

How far the following work may supply a definite view of this great Christian doctrine, it is not for me to do more than hope. It is my heart's desire to lend a hand, so far as I may, to the great and charitable work of clearing off the entangle-

¹ Nelson's Fasts and Festivals. Preface, p. xiii.

ments by which the path of unity has been all but hidden from the eyes of men of good will.

The course I have taken is as follows:—I have treated the subject of unity in three aspects: first, its positive nature, or *what* it is by the ordinance of God; next, so far as Holy Scripture will carry us, the end and design, or *why* God has so ordained the scheme of our redemption; and lastly, the existing anomalies of the Christian world, or how we may reconcile the exact doctrine of unity with the irregularities which are visible around us. The first part, therefore, is dogmatic or historical, tracing out the doctrine of Unity in the Catholic Creeds, and in the uninspired and inspired documents of the Church. The second part is moral, but confined for proof to the testimony of Holy Scripture alone. The third and last is practical or casuistical, and is discussed upon the principles and by the lights gathered from the two previous parts, and from the decisions of the Catholic Church.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE ANTIQUITY OF THE ARTICLE, "I BELIEVE IN
THE HOLY CHURCH."

BEFORE we proceed to examine the intention of this article of the Catholic creeds, it will be right to make some inquiry into its antiquity.

That it has been received as a part of the Christian Faith in all churches of the East and West, through the whole tract of time since the Council of Constantinople, is admitted on all hands.

But a question may yet be raised as to its origin. It may still be asked whether or no this article were included in the Creed in the times of the Apostles; whether or no they required of every convert a profession of belief in the one Holy Church?

In answering this question, we will begin by collecting the facts of the case, and then make some remarks upon them, so as to lay the ground for a definite conclusion.

I. In the first place, the whole Catholic Church, having united in receiving the creed of the Council

of Constantinople, has united in holding as an article of faith the doctrine of "one Catholic and Apostolic Church," since the year A.D. 381; that is, for about fifteen hundred years.

Our inquiry, therefore, is limited to the three centuries from the Council of Constantinople to the first opening of the Apostolic mission.

Now, we must observe that the Constantinopolitan or Nicene Creed has a character peculiar to itself, being the first promulgation of the Christian faith by conciliary authority. It may be called, therefore, a conciliary or synodal creed (*symbolum synodale*), to distinguish it from the baptismal creeds of the several Churches of which it was a public representative. The creed of the Nicene Council, although readily embraced by all branches of the Catholic Church, has never to this day displaced the baptismal creed of the Western Church, and was partially and by slow degrees substituted for the other traditional forms in the Eastern. Some Churches incorporated a portion of it in their own particular creed; but the catechetical lectures of St. Cyril, which were delivered after the closing of the Nicene Council, are an exposition of the baptismal creed, which was retained in the Church of Jerusalem until the middle of the fourth century. Even so late as the middle of the fifth, the Church of Antioch still retained its own baptismal confession.¹

¹ Observ. in Symb. Hierosol., p. 80. 3. Opp. S. Cyril. Hier. Ed. Touttée.

We must, therefore, refer to the baptismal creeds of the several Churches.

(1) And, first, of the Eastern Church.

Epiphanius has preserved two creeds, which he enjoins pastors of the Church to teach to such as are approaching the baptismal font (*μέλλοντας τῷ ἁγίῳ λουτρῷ προσιέναι*).¹ In what particular Churches they were used is not certainly known, except that they were the Churches of Cyprus, and especially of Salamis, of which Epiphanius was Bishop.²

In one (of which he says "This is the faith which was delivered by the holy Apostles, and in the Church, the holy city, by all the holy Bishops, with one accord, to the number of more than three hundred and ten")³ the article stands thus: "We believe . . . in one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church;" and in the other, "We believe in One Catholic and Apostolic Church."

Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, in his letter to Alexander of Constantinople (about A.D. 317), exposing the impiety of the Arians, recites the form of doctrine taught in his own Church (*ταῦτα διδάσκουμεν, ταῦτα κηρύττομεν, ταῦτα τῆς ἐκκλησίας τὰ ἀποστολικά δόγματα, κ. τ. λ.*): "We confess," he

¹ Epiph. Ancoratus. ss. cxix, cxx. cxxi. Walchius, Bibliotheca Symbolica, 50, 51.

² Walchius, *ibid.* 52, 53.

³ Epiph. Ancor. cxx.: εἰς μίαν ἁγίαν καθολικὴν καὶ Ἀποστολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν.

says, "one and one only Catholic Church, that which is Apostolic."¹

The next creed we may adduce will have more weight for our present purpose, for the very reason which shakes its authority in other respects, being a confession of faith, presented, as it is believed, by Arius and Euzoius, when they made a sort of feigned recantation. In the article before us it runs as follows:—"We believe . . . in one Catholic Church of God, which is from one end of the world to the other." They go on to say, "This faith we received from the holy Gospels, forasmuch as the Lord said to his disciples, Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c."² This was doubtless the creed of the Alexandrian Church, to which they desired reconciliation.³

I have already spoken of the creed of the Church of Jerusalem, expounded by St. Cyril to the candidates for baptism. He calls it "the holy Apostolic faith," and everywhere treats it as the doctrine which the Church had always held and taught to the baptized. The present article stands thus: "We believe . . . in one holy Catholic Church."⁴

The creeds of the Churches of Antioch and Cæsarea are preserved by several fathers and doc-

¹ Μίαν καὶ μόνην καθολικὴν τὴν Ἀποστολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν. Theodoret, lib. 1. civ. pp. 19, 20, ed. Reading. Walch. p. 49.

² Socrat. Hist. lib. 1. c. 26. Walch. p. 49. Bingham, Orig. Eccl. b. x. c. v. s. 10.

³ Διὸ παρακαλοῦμεν . . . ἐνοῦσθαι ἡμᾶς . . . τῇ μητρὶ ἡμῶν. Socrat. Hist. ibid.

⁴ Catech. xviii. 32: εἰς μίαν ἁγίαν καθολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν.

tors of the Church, but only by way of testimony against the Arian heresy. In their citations, therefore, no more is quoted than was enough to condemn the errors against which they testified. For this reason the third and last member of the creed is almost wholly omitted.¹

There still remain to be cited two very remarkable documents of the Eastern Church.

In the exposition of the Apostles' Creed, by Rufinus, is to be seen a comparison of three several forms, the Roman, the Aquileian, and a third which he refers to as the creed of the Eastern Church. This Eastern creed is extant only in Latin,—is almost identical with the Aquileian and Roman,—was plainly very much more ancient than the Nicene Council,—and may be taken as the representative to the Western or Latin Churches of the faith of the Greek Churches of the East. We shall hereafter see reason to conclude that the fact of its existing only in Latin is no objection to its genuineness. In this creed the article stands in these words: "I believe . . . the Holy Church."²

The other and the last which I shall adduce from the Eastern Church is the baptismal creed, recited in the book of the Apostolical Constitutions.

It must be observed that this compilation was made probably in the third or fourth century, but

¹ See Walch. pp. 40, 46. Bingham, b. x. cv. s. 9, 11, and xiv., where he shows the reason of this omission.

² Rufin. Expos. in Symb. Ap. ad calc. S. Cypriani Opp. "Credo . . . Sanctam Ecclesiam."

the date is unimportant, inasmuch as it is not denied that the book exhibits to us the outline and condition of the Church from its earliest times. The compiler, after giving directions how catechumens ought to be instructed, describes the renunciation of Satan made in baptism, and the confession of Christ which followed. The candidate was directed to say, "I believe and am baptized into one unbegotten, the only true God, &c. . . . I am baptized into the Holy Ghost, that is the Comforter, which wrought in all the saints from the beginning, and afterwards was sent also to the apostles by the Father, according to the promise of the Saviour our Lord Jesus Christ, and after the apostles to all who in the Holy Catholic Church believe also;" &c.¹

(2) We may now, in like manner, collect the suffrages of the Western Church.

We will begin by citing the creed of the Spanish Church, preserved by Etherius and Beatus in a book written against Elipandus. Although this work was compiled towards the end of the eighth century, yet the creed recited by them is given as the baptismal creed of the Church, and believed by them to be transmitted from the apostles.² The article stands thus:—I believe . . . the Holy Catholic Church."

In the ancient missal of the Gallican Church, as

¹ Apost. Const. lib. vii. c. 41.

² Bibliotheca Vet. Patr. Gallandii, tom. xiii. 295. "Sanctam Ecclesiam Catholicam."

given by Martene,¹ is the creed which was delivered to candidates for baptism. The article runs as usual—"I believe . . . one Holy Catholic Church."

Another creed used in the Gallican Church, probably at Poitiers, is preserved in an exposition by Venantius Fortunatus,² who was Bishop of that see in the sixth century. It is evidently a very ancient form, the articles of the Burial of Christ, the "Communion of Saints," and "Life everlasting," being omitted, which is not the case in the later creeds. The article before us stands, "I believe . . . the Holy Church," which is its simplest and earliest form.

St. Augustine has delivered to us the creed of the African Church, in his book *De Fide et Symbolo*,³ where the article stands, "I believe . . . the Holy Catholic Church."

Maximus, Bishop of Tours (A.D. 422), has preserved the baptismal creed of that Church.⁴ Its great antiquity is evident from the simplicity of the wording. The article runs, as in the oldest forms, "I believe . . . the Holy Church."

In the creed of the Church of Ravenna, given by Petrus Chrysologus, who was Bishop of that see,⁵ the article is found as follows: "I believe . . . the Holy Catholic Church."

¹ *De Antiq. Ecclesiæ Ritibus*. tom. i. 33.

² *Venantii Opp.* P. i. lib. xi. ed. Rom. p. 377.

³ *S. Aug.* tom. vi. 161.

⁴ *Maximi Taurin. Opp.* Hom. i. *De diversis ad calc.* *Opp. S. Leonis* ed. Venet. 1748, ed. Rom. p. 272.

⁵ *Petri Chrysol. Hom.* lvii. *Opp.* ed. Venet. 1742.

Of the creed used by the church of Aquileia, there are extant three several forms: two preserved by a writer who lived about the middle of the ninth century,¹ and one by Ruffinus, in the fourth,² which he represents as the immemorial tradition of the Church. The three forms differ only in one word; two having, "I believe . . . the Holy Church," and one "I believe . . . the Holy Catholic Church."

Our last witness is that of the Roman Church. There are extant no fewer than seven forms,³ so authenticated by their relation to the Roman Church as to represent to us the baptismal confession there in use.

Three of them are found in the Greek language. Strange as this fact may seem at first sight, it is capable of an easy and full explanation.

It was the custom in the Roman and many other Latin Churches, to recite the Creed both in Latin and in Greek, at the season of conferring baptism. This custom was so long preserved, that when in the darker times of the Western Church the Clergy could not so much as read the Greek character, the Greek version of the Creed was written in their ritual in the Italic; and, as Archbishop Ussher discovered, also in the Anglo-Saxon character.⁴ This last transcript is to be seen at the

¹ Walch. Bib. Symb. pp. 54, 56.

² Ruffin. Expos. in Symb.; also Walch. *ibid.* p. 37.

³ Walch. *ibid.* pp. 56, 61.

⁴ Usserii de Romanæ Eccl. Symbolis Diatriba, p. 8. The in-

end of King Athelstan's Psalter, written about the year A.D. 703.¹

Moreover, one of the Greek versions is a translation of what we commonly call the Apostles' Creed.² It is most likely that both these were received by the Anglo-Saxon from the Roman Church.

A third form is called the Creed of Marcellus of Ancyra, and was delivered by him to Julius, Bishop of Rome, to attest his orthodoxy, when he had been driven by the Arians or Eusebians from his see.³ This version is in more exact agreement with the Roman than with any Eastern Creed, being doubtless the Baptismal Creed of that Church, adopted by Marcellus as a guarantee of his orthodoxy.

In these forms the article stands as follows:—
In two of them, "I believe . . . the Holy Church."
In the third, "I believe . . . in the Holy Catholic Church."

Of the Latin forms, one is the Creed commonly called the Creed of the Apostles, which has, "I believe . . . the Holy Catholic Church." A second is found in the Roman Ordinal, in which the article

terrogation before the Creed was also used in Greek in the church of Poitiers. See Martene de Antiq. Eccl. Ritibus, tom. 1, p. 38. Walch. *ibid.* p. 57.

¹ Bingham, Orig. Eccl. B. x. c. v. s. 10, and Ussher *ut supra*.

² Walch. Bib. Symb. p. 58.

³ Bibliotheca Vet. Patr. Galland. tom. v. 17. The view in the text is taken by Archbishop Ussher, and by Walchius, Bib. Symb. pp. 56, 57.

stands in the same words. A third is the Creed given by Archbishop Ussher as the ordinary form, which has, "I believe . . . the Holy Church." The fourth and last is a response made by the candidate for Baptism, in the Sacramentary of Gelasius, which has, "I believe . . . the Holy Church."

II. Having now gathered the facts on which this question must ultimately rest, I proceed to make a few observations, after which we may venture to draw our conclusion.

(1) And first it is evident that a belief in the Unity of the Church forms an article in every Baptismal Creed of every Church, both in the East and in the West.

I am not aware of any Baptismal Creed extant in which this article is not to be read.

And here certain remarks must be made to guard this assertion from objections.

There are to be found condensed and oblique citations of the ancient Creeds, adduced by the Fathers for the special and direct purpose of refuting some emergent and partial heresy. In such cases, a part only of the Creed is quoted, as the two first members were wont to be adduced in the Arian controversy. The omission of the rest, which is sometimes marked in words (as by "et reliqua"), though sometimes not marked at all, is no disproof of the assertion made. This will apply to the citation of Creeds of the Churches of Cæsarea and Antioch, mentioned before,¹ and to some others.

¹ Supra p. 13.

Again, there are certain interlocutory forms of confessing the Holy Trinity, which were repeated by candidates for baptism, from which almost all other articles were omitted, as the form in the Liturgy of St. James, which runs as follows:—"I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God." But this if taken as an objection would prove too much, as it omits also the article of "the Holy Ghost."¹ Another is to be seen in the Catechetics of St. Cyril:—"I believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, and in one baptism of repentance."² But it is evident that this is not the confession of faith, but an act of self-dedication to the Holy Trinity, made by the catechumen turning to the East before he turned to the West for the abrenunciation of Satan. This was the practice of several Churches: as, for instance, at Jerusalem, at Rome, at Milan, and in the Churches of Spain, Gaul, and Cappadocia.³ Nevertheless, in these Churches the entire Creed also was recited by candidates for baptism. The self-dedication to the Holy Trinity was a distinct part of the baptismal office. There is also, in the *Sermo de Symbolo ad Catechumenos*,⁴ falsely ascribed to St. Augustine, a form which omits this

¹ Walch. Bib. Symb. p. 42. Probably only the first words are given as a rubrical order.

² S. Cyril. Catech. xix. 9, ed. Touttée.

³ S. Cyril. ed. Touttée. Prolog. in Catech. Myst. s. viii. p. 305.

⁴ S. Aug. tom. vi. 556. ed. Ben.

article; but it omits also several other parts, as the word “only,” and “Lord” in the confession of Jesus Christ, also the session at the right hand of God.¹ In other respects also it so far varies from the wording of the African Creed as to show that it is not a baptismal form, and this is all I am concerned to prove.

Lastly, the rule of faith appealed to by St. Irenæus² and Tertullian³ is plainly, and even at first sight, a large and loose recital of the Evangelical traditions, nearly enough allied to the baptismal confession to remind the reader throughout of the exacter forms, but at the same time so visibly informal and general as to disclaim for itself all pretension to the exactness of a baptismal Creed. They sufficiently indicate the existence, and represent the substance of such a form, while they manifestly disclaim for themselves the character and authority of a recognised Creed.

Such being the three classes of documents from which apparent objections may be alleged, it is clear that the omission of this article in such documents is no disproof of the assertion that the article of the Unity of the Church forms a part of every Baptismal Creed in existence.

I say the article of the Unity of the Church, for

¹ Ibid. 561, 564.

² Adv. Hær. lib. i. 10. ed. Ben.

³ De Virg. Veland. c. 1. Contra Prax. c. 2. De Præscrip. c. 13. ed. Rigalt.

such is the substance in which all Creeds, how variously soever they may be worded, exactly agree.

The variety of expression in the forms above cited may be reduced to the following classes.

They all assert the article in some one of these three forms :—

1. "One Catholic and Apostolic Church," as the Constantinopolitan or Nicene; the Creed recited by Epiphanius, and the Alexandrian, which adds (*μόνην*), "one only."

2. "The Holy Catholic Church," as the Apostles' Creed, the Spanish, the Gallican, the forms in the Roman Ordinal and the Apostolical Constitution, and one of the Aquileian Creeds.

3. "The Holy Church," as the Roman, two of the Aquileian Creeds, the Ancient Eastern, the Creed of Marcellus, the Creeds of Ravenna, Turin, the African, one of the Gallican, and the form in the Sacramentary of Gelasius.

There are one or two formularies which, because of some slight variety in the combination of the terms, will not fall into these classes, and may therefore stand alone, not being of sufficient importance to make a separate class.

Of the three classes above given, the first two, which are more explicit, are also later. The third and last class represents the article as it is found in the earliest Creeds, and with this therefore we have now to do.

At present it is sufficient to conclude that the

Unity of the Church is contained as an article of faith in every Baptismal Creed on record.

(2) The next observation I would make is, that there is positive evidence that a profession of faith in the Unity of the Church formed part of the Baptismal Creed as early as the second century.

The writers who have handed down these formularies always and everywhere speak of them as a tradition of immemorial antiquity: the Bishops and Catechists of the fourth century—*i. e.* between the years A.D. 300 and A.D. 400—deliver these Creeds to the catechumens as the same form of words on the profession of which they and their forefathers were baptized: they assume everywhere that it is an Apostolical tradition.

But we have more direct evidence than this general presumption.

St. Cyprian, writing to Magnus concerning the Novatian schism (A.D. 255), says, "But if any one should object, and say that Novatian holds the same rule as the Catholic Church, baptizes in the same Creed that we do, acknowledges the same God the Father, the same Christ the Son, the same Holy Ghost; and for that reason, because he appears not to differ from us in the interrogatories at baptism, may therefore exercise the power of baptizing; let such an objector know, first, that we have not one and the same rule in the Creed with the schismatics, nor the same interrogatories; for when they say, 'Dost thou believe the remission of sins, and life

everlasting through the Holy Church?' they lie in their interrogatory, forasmuch as they do not hold the Church. Then by the confession which they make with their own mouth, that the remission of sins cannot be given except through the Holy Church, which they do not hold to, they themselves show that sins cannot be forgiven among them."¹

Hence it is clear beyond a controversy that the article stood in the Baptismal Creed, both of the Catholic Church and of the Novatian schism.

But we have in the next epistle a direct proof. In the following letter St. Cyprian writes:—"The very interrogatory which is made in baptism is a witness of the truth: for when we say, 'Dost thou believe in life everlasting, and the remission of sins through the Holy Church?' we understand that remission of sins is given only in the Church."²

The next evidence, and of a still earlier date, is a passage of Tertullian in his treatise on Baptism. Speaking of the Holy Trinity, he says, "If by three witnesses every word shall stand, how much more does the number of the Divine names suffice also to confirm our hope, seeing that we have by the benediction the same as witnesses of (our) faith, who are also the sureties of our salvation? But forasmuch as the attestation of (our) faith, and the

¹ *Ad Magnum*, Ep. 69. ed. Fell. p. 296. Walch. *Bibl. Symb.* p. 12.

² Ep. 70. ed. Fell. p. 301. Walch. p. 13.

promise of salvation, are pledged under three (i. e. witnesses), the mention of the Church is necessarily added, since where three are—that is, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—there is the Church, which is the body of the three. After that, when we have come out of the font, we are anointed with the blessed oil.”¹ The last sentence puts it beyond all controversy that Tertullian is narrating the substance of the Baptismal confession made by the candidate in the font.

But to put the fact even further out of doubt, we may refer to the full and deliberate argument raised by St. Augustine on the relation in which this article of the Creed stands to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. After expounding the Creed at large, he says:—“In like manner we ought to believe in the Holy Ghost, that the Trinity, which is God, may have its fulness. Then the Holy Church is mentioned.” “The right order of the confession required that to the Trinity should be subjoined the Church, as the dwelling to the inhabitant, and as His temple to the Lord, and the city to its builder.”²

From what has been said we may safely conclude that the article of the Unity of the Church was a part of the Baptismal Creed in Tertullian’s time, that is, at the end of the second century.

¹ Tertull. de Bapt. s. 6. ed. Rigalt, p. 226. Pearson on the Creed, p. 334.

² S. Aug. Enchirid. de Fide, &c., c. lvi. tom. vi. 217.

"The?"
"not?"
"By?"
"The?"
"by?"
"The?"
"indie?"
"appoi?"
"the?"
"the?"
"been?"
"but?"
"by?"
"the?"
"the?"
"the?"
"one?"
"the?"
"God?"
"you?"
"are?"
"He?"
"body?"

The learned annotator on Bishop Bull's '*Judicium Ecclesiæ Catholicæ*,' after admitting this conclusion, imagines that this article was inserted at the end of the first or the beginning of the second century, when heretics and schismatics began to form separate congregations. But this necessity existed from the time of St. Paul's preaching at Corinth, and throughout the whole course of the Apostolic times.¹

(3) The last observation I would, therefore, make is, that no time can be assigned, nor any person alleged, when and by whom this article was first introduced into the Creed. If it was not in the Baptismal Creed used by the Apostles, it must have been introduced at some time between the death of St. John, about A.D. 100, and the birth of Tertullian, about A.D. 150.² If so, the name of the person who introduced it, or of the Church where it was first received, or the time of the insertion, or the cause of its adoption, would surely have been at least hinted in the history of the Church. But there is not so much as the slightest trace of such an event: and this strange silence on so great a matter, in a circle and series of so many Churches, both Greek and Latin, in the East and in the West, which must have adopted it gradually and in succession, puts such a conjecture past all belief.

¹ Annotata J. E. Grabe in *Judic. Eccl. Cathol.* ad cap. vi. s. 11.

² Bishop of Lincoln's *History of the Second and Third Centuries*, p. 12.

Whensoever additions were made to the Creed they were noted, and the reasons avowed, as in the insertion of the words “of one substance” against the Arians; and indeed in this particular article, in the addition of the word “Catholic,” which was first inserted by the Greek Churches for the purpose, as St. Cyril¹ tells us, of distinguishing the true Church from all schismatical congregations. The addition of the epithet “Catholic” to the words “Holy Church” was thus carefully recorded, but the origin of the article to which the addition was made must be sought in the same teaching from whence the Baptismal Confession was itself derived. Still, in thus referring to the institution of the Apostles it is hardly necessary that we should refute in express terms the story which narrates that the Apostles’ Creed was compiled by a synod of the Apostles, each making his several contribution of one of the articles as they now stand: the article, which is the subject of our present inquiry, being the portion assigned to St. Matthew. This fanciful account had its rise in the fifth century; is a Latin tradition, being unknown to the Eastern Churches;² and is self-convicted of untruth, as the Creed commonly called the Apostles’ Creed is well known to have been augmented. The

¹ S. Cyril. Catech. xviii. s. 26.

² When the Latins at the Council of Florence affirmed that their creed was composed by the Apostles, the Greeks answered *ἡμεῖς οὔτε ἔχομεν οὔτε εἶδομεν σύμβολον τῶν Ἀποστόλων*. “We neither possess nor have seen any creed of the Apostles.” See Suicer. Thesaur. Eccl. in voc. *σύμβολον*.

least augmentation destroys the statement above recited.¹

The foregoing evidence sufficiently proves that all churches consented in professing at baptism a belief in the Holy Church—that this article existed in the baptismal forms of the second century—that no entire baptismal form can be adduced from which it is omitted, and no time assigned for such an insertion, nor any intimation that such an addition to the Creed was made between the beginning and the end of the first century (for to this short tract of time the question is finally narrowed)—I conclude that a belief in the Unity of the Church, however expressed in words, was required of every candidate for Christian baptism from the beginning of the Gospel. For “whatsoever the Universal Church maintains, the same being instituted by no council, but always retained, is rightly believed to be handed down from no other authority than that of the Apostles.”²

¹ Dupin. History of Eccl. Writers, vol. i. p. 378, folio, 1723.

² S. Aug. de Bapt. contra Donatistas, lib. iv. c. xxiv. tom. ix. 140.

CHAPTER II.

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE ARTICLE "THE HOLY CHURCH" AS TAUGHT BY UNINSPIRED WRITERS.

In the foregoing chapter we have considered what may be called the history of the article before us. No attempt has been made to attach to it any definite interpretation. So far every class of Christians, except those who reject the Catholic Creeds, may claim the authority of the Baptismal Confession, as a witness to confirm each several way of explaining the Unity of the Church. For in teaching that there is only one Church of Christ all Christians agree, the only controversy being wherein that one Church consists.

Let it be clearly understood that in this chapter we shall follow exactly the same course as in the foregoing.

Our inquiry will still be strictly historical. I shall abstain with all carefulness from seeming to assert

what is the true doctrine of the Unity of the Church, and shall confine myself to inquiring in what sense this article was expounded in the earliest times. Whether such expositions be right or wrong will be a matter for discussion hereafter. For the present it is enough to examine how this article was wont to be interpreted, or, to use the same form of speech as before, to consider the history of the interpretation.

The only point, therefore, for the reader's judgment is, whether or no the mind of the writers, hereafter adduced, be truly represented.

It will be both the simpler and surer course to take first the particular expositions of the article, and next the general teaching of Christian writers on the doctrine of the Unity of the Church.

I. Of the particular expositions of the Creed, the earliest is that of St. Cyril. It is preserved to us in the form of catechetical lectures to candidates for holy baptism. They were delivered about A.D. 347, before he was raised to the bishopric of Jerusalem. In the creed of that Church, as in most of the Eastern creeds, the word "Catholic" had already been inserted.

"Let us therefore speak," he says, "of what remains, namely, on the article, 'and in One Holy Catholic Church.' It is called, then, Catholic, because it is throughout the whole world, from one end of the earth to the other; and because it teaches universally and without fail all doctrines that are necessary for man to know, concerning

both visible and invisible things, both heavenly and earthly ; and because it subjects the whole race of man unto godliness, both rulers and ruled, learned and unlearned ; and because it universally tends, and heals every form of sin committed in soul and body ; and because there is contained in it every kind of virtue which is named in deed and word, and all kinds of spiritual gifts.

“It is called the ‘Church’ (ἐκκλησία) by a most fitting appellation, because it calls out all men, and gathers them in one, as the Lord speaks in the book of Leviticus—‘Call together (ἐκκλησίασον) the whole congregation (συναγωγή) to the door of the tabernacle of witness.’ Moreover it is worthy of observation that this word (ἐκκλησίασον) is first used in Scripture in this place when the Lord appointed Aaron to the high priesthood. From the time that the Jews, on account of their wicked plotting against the Saviour, were cast away from grace, the Saviour built a second Church from the Gentiles, that is, the Holy Church of us Christians, concerning which he said to Peter, ‘And on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’ After the one Church which was in Judea had been cut off, thenceforward the Churches of Christ are multiplied throughout all the world. . . . But forasmuch as the name ‘Church’ is applied to diverse things therefore the Creed with guarded care has delivered to thee the article ‘in One Holy Ca-

tholic Church,' that thou mayest avoid the hateful assemblies (of heretics) and cleave alway to the holy Catholic Church in which thou wast regenerated. And if at any time thou art in strange cities, ask, not merely, where is the Lord's house?—for the sects and heresies of the impious endeavour to honour their dens with the name of the Lord's house—nor merely, where is the Church? but, where is the Catholic Church? for that is the proper name of her that is holy and the mother of us all. For when that first Church had been cut off, in the second, that is, the^aCatholic Church, 'God,' as Paul saith, 'gave, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, then powers, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues,' &c. And whereas the kings of particular nations have limits set to their power, the Holy Catholic Church alone has a power without limit in all the world."¹

The next exposition is that of Ruffinus, a few years later than St. Cyril.

"The tradition of the faith contains next 'the Holy Church.' They, therefore, who have been already taught to believe in one God, in the mystery of the Trinity, ought also to believe this, that the Holy Church is one, in which is one faith and one baptism, in which men believe in one God the Father, one Lord Jesus Christ His Son, and one Holy Ghost. That, therefore, is the Holy Church,

¹ S. Cyril. Hieros. Cat. xxiii. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

not having spot or wrinkle. Many others, indeed, have gathered Churches, as Marcion, Valentinus, Hebion, Manichæus, and Arius, and all other heretics. But they are not Churches without spot or wrinkle of false faith. And therefore the prophet said concerning them, 'I hate the congregation of evil-doers, and with the wicked I will not sit.' But concerning the Church which keeps whole the faith of Christ, hear what the Holy Ghost says in the Song of Songs, 'My dove is one, the perfect one of her mother is one.'"¹

St. Augustine, in his book 'De Fide et Symbolo,' speaks as follows:—

"But forasmuch as we are not only commanded to love God, when it is said 'thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy mind,' but also our neighbour, 'for,' he saith, 'thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' if this faith (of ours) does not hold to the congregation and fellowship of men in which brotherly love worketh, it bears less fruit. We believe, moreover, 'the Holy Church,' that is, 'the Catholic.' For both heretics and schismatics call their congregations Churches. But heretics, by false opinions concerning God, violate the faith itself; and schismatics, by their evil divisions, break off from brotherly love, though they believe the same things that we believe. Wherefore neither heretics belong

¹ Rufin. Expos. in Symb. Ap. ad calc. opp. S. Cyp. p. 166. ed. Fell.

*Schism
are the
divisions
truth;
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to the Catholic Church, for that it loves God; nor schismatics, for that it loves our neighbour.”¹

And again, in his discourse *De Symbolo*, he says, “After the confession of the Trinity follows ‘the Holy Church.’ Both God and his temple are set forth. ‘For,’ saith the apostle, ‘the temple of God is holy, which (temple) ye are.’ The same is the Holy Church, the one Church, the true Church, the Catholic Church, warring against all heresies; for war it may, but warred down it never can be. All heresies went out from her, as worthless branches cut from the vine: but she abideth in her root, in her life, in her love. Her the gates of hell shall not overcome.”²

Among the works of St. Augustine are three discourses on the Creed, which for a long time were supposed to be his. The Benedictine editors, on the strength of internal evidence, have judged them to be the work of some other hand. They were, however, manifestly written about the fourth century, for they speak of the Arian heresy as the active and foremost enemy of the Church.

On the article we treat of the writer says, “No man can have love or charity who is not in His Church; forasmuch as no one that is out of it can be with God, who is life eternal. Therefore this mystery (the Creed) concludes with the Church, for that she is the fruitful mother, perfect and chaste,

¹ S. Aug. *Liber de Fide et Symbolo*, tom. vi. 161. ed. Ben.

² *Liber de Symbolo*, c. vi. tom. vi. 554. ed Ben.

everywhere spread abroad, bearing spiritual sons unto God, spiritually nourishing her little ones with the milk of her words, teaching boys wisdom, guarding youth from luxury and immodesty by her holy chastity, arming young men against the devil with the strength of virtue, and teaching the aged prudence, and making the elders venerable. Through her, young men and virgins, the elders with the young, every age and sex, praise the name of the Lord. She recalls her sons from their wanderings, weeps mournfully for the dead, and nourishes without lack those that cleave unto her. Her, my beloved, let us all love: to such a mother, so loving, so provident, so prudent, let us all inseparably cling, that together with her and through her we may be meet to be for ever joined to God the Father.”¹

In another of these discourses the writer thus expounds the same words: “The end of this mystery is therefore summed up by the Holy Church: because if any man is found without it, he will be an alien from the number of sons; nor shall he have God for his Father who will not have the Church for his mother: nor will it avail him anything to have believed and done so many good works, without the end of the chief good. The Church is a spiritual mother: the Church is the bride of Christ, clad in white by His grace, dowried with His precious blood. She possesses all that she received in

¹ Liber de Symbolo, tom. vi. 575.

dowry from her Husband. I will read and recite the marriage deed. Hear, ye heretics, what is written. 'It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations.' 'All nations' signifies all the world. The Church possesses all that she received in dowry from her Husband. The congregation of heresy, whatsoever it be, that sits in a corner, it is an harlot and not a matron. O thou heresy of Arius, why insultest thou? why dost thou scornfully renounce us? why for a time dost thou usurp so boldly? The wife suffers injurious treatment from thee, the bondwoman: thou loadest her with many contumelies. Though she weep, the Holy Catholic Church, the spouse of Christ, doth not greatly fear thee. For so soon as the Spouse shall look upon her, thou as a bondwoman shalt be cast out with thy children; for the children of the bondwoman shall not be heirs with the children of the free. Let her therefore be acknowledged as the One, Holy, True, and Catholic queen, to whom Christ hath given such a kingdom; for He hath spread her abroad throughout the world, and cleansed her from all spot and wrinkle, and hath made her ready and altogether fair for His own coming."¹

In another exposition by Nicetas, Bishop of Aquileia, in the fifth century, we find the article thus explained. "After the confession of the blessed

¹ Liber de Symbolo, tom. vi. 582.

Trinity thou makest profession of faith in the Holy Catholic Church. What else is the Church than the congregation of all saints? From the beginning of the world all (the righteous), whether patriarchs, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or prophets, or apostles, or martyrs, or any other who have been, or are, or shall be righteous, are one Church, inasmuch as, being sanctified by one faith and conversation, sealed by one Spirit, they are made one body, of which Christ is head, as it is declared and written. I say more, even angels, and virtues, and the higher powers, are confederated in this one Church, as the Apostle teaches us that 'in Christ are all things reconciled, not only things in earth, but things in heaven.' Believe, therefore, that in this one Church thou shalt attain to the communion of saints. Know that this one Church is the Catholic Church founded in all the world, to whose communion thou oughtest firmly to cleave. There are indeed other false churches, but have thou nothing in common with them: such as the Manichees, the Cataphryges, the Marcionists, or of the other heretics and schismatics, for these churches cease to be holy, inasmuch as they, being deceived by the doctrines of devils, believe and act otherwise than Christ the Lord commanded, and the Apostles ordained."¹

¹ S. Nicetæ *Explanatio Symboli*, p. 44. Romæ, 1827; & *Scriptorum Vet. Nova Collect.* ab Angelo Maio, tom. vii. p. 336.

We may now gather from the passages above given the general outlines of interpretation.

1. They assert, first, that as there was only one congregation of Israel, so there is only one visible Church in the world.

2. Secondly, that it is holy, as being the temple of God.

3. Thirdly, that this one Church is not restricted to one nation, as Israel, but has received the dowry

notices are of all nations, and is therefore Catholic.

who frequently to themselves,
4. Fourthly, that it contains the saints, as of all nations so of all times, and is, therefore, a body partly visible and partly invisible.

by and
these are
of as persons
had false
ness. The
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it therefore
5. Fifthly, that neither heretics, howsoever nearly they may approach the true faith, nor schismatics, though they may hold the true faith entire, are members of the one Church.

any such
schism
which
is not
Whether right or wrong, these positions are asserted by St. Cyril, Ruffinus, St. Augustine, the anonymous expositor, and by Nicetas.

one has
illegally
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II. But as the earliest of these writers lived in the fourth century, and as their expositions may be suspected of a narrowness arising from the compendious way in which it was necessary to instruct candidates for baptism, we will go on to ascertain from the treatises of the fathers written at large, and designed for the fully instructed members of the Church, how far these expositions are a fair and exact statement of Catholic doctrine.

of passage
over the writer meant to use these words in the
limited sense, the bracketed passage is misapplied
argument for it does not in that case follow that
only through the Church men can be saved.
it may be proved from Scripture if the Church be
in to sustain. He who believes the truth without
to the
(1) We will first examine such passages as relate

to that part of the one Holy Church which is visible in the world.

St. Irenæus says that "God led Abraham and his seed into the kingdom of Heaven, which is the Church through Jesus Christ, to whom is given the adoption and the inheritance which was promised to Abraham."¹ In another place he says, that "As Jacob took the blessing from Esau, so the latter people (*i. e.* the Church) took away the blessing from the former (*i. e.* from the Jews), for which cause he suffered the plots and persecutions of his brother, as the Church also suffers the same from the Jews. The twelve tribes, the family of Israel, were born in a strange land, as Christ also began to form among strangers the twelve-pillared foundation of the Church;"² and afterwards, "For the whole going forth of the people of God from Egypt was a type and image of the going forth of the Church which should be among the Gentiles: for this also, in the end, He led the Church towards its inheritance, which not Moses the servant of God, but Jesus the Son of God shall give in possession."³ And the Church thus prefigured and adumbrated by Israel, St. Irenæus describes as "scattered abroad throughout the world . . . dwelling as it were in one house . . . having one soul, one and the same heart . . . and teaching with one mouth."⁴

¹ S. Irenæus, lib. iv. viii. p. 236. ed. Ben.

² Ibid. lib. iv. c. xxi.

³ Ibid. lib. iv. c. xxx.

⁴ Ibid. lib. i. cx.

The language of Tertullian is to the same effect. The Apostles, he says, "went into all the world and preached the same doctrine of the same faith to the nations, and founded Churches in every city, from which afterwards the rest of the Churches borrowed the line of the faith and the seeds of doctrine, and do daily borrow it, and so become Churches. And for this cause they also are reputed Apostolical, being the offspring of Apostolical Churches. Every family must be traced back to its original; therefore these so many and great Churches are that one first Church which the Apostles founded, from which all are sprung. So all are primitive and all Apostolical, so long as all are one. The proof of unity is the participation of peace, the salutation of brotherhood, and the interchange of hospitality."

St. Clement of Alexandria writes, "Wherefore I conceive it has been made manifest by what has been said, that the true Church, the Church which is indeed primitive, is one, into which the just according to the purpose (of God) are gathered. For God being one and the Lord one, therefore whatever is most highly precious is praised in respect that it stands alone, being a likeness of the one first principle. In the nature, however, of the One partaketh that One Church which heresies violently strive to rend into many: wherefore in its substance, and its mind, and its principle, and its excellence, we declare the primitive and Catholic Church to be one only, unto the unity of the

¹ Tertull. de præscr. Hæret. c. xx. Opuscula, ed Routh.

one faith, which is according to the several covenants, or rather according to the one covenant at divers times, which by the will of one God, through one Lord, gathers together those that are ordained whom God hath predestinated, having known before the foundation of the world that they would be righteous. Wherefore the excellence of the Church, like the principle of its constitution, is in its oneness, thereby transcending all other things, and having nothing like or equal to it."¹ In another place he calls it "the gathering together of the elect."²

The testimony of St. Cyprian is so well known that I need quote no more than one passage from his treatise on the Unity of the Church.

After showing that our Lord singled out St. Peter, and made him a type of Unity by giving first to one alone the power of the keys, he says, "For the inculcation of Unity, He disposed by his authority that the beginning of that Unity should have its rise in one. The other Apostles were what Peter was—endowed with a like share of honour and power, but the beginning was made from one, that the Church might be shown to be one. . . . The Apostle Paul teaches the same thing, and shows forth the mystery of Unity, when he says, 'There is one body and one Spirit, and one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one

¹ S. Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. 17. tom. ii. 899.

² Ibid. vii. 6. tom. ii. p. 846.

God.' The Church is one, which by the growth of its fruitfulness is spread widely into a multitude: as there are many rays of the sun, but one light, and many branches of a tree, but one trunk planted in the clinging root, and though from one fountain many rivers flow, so that there seem to be many several streams by reason of the fulness of the abundant flood, yet is the oneness maintained in the original spring. Take off a ray from the body of the sun, the unity of light admits no division; cut off a stream from the fountain, that which is cut off dries up: so the Church, filled throughout with the light of the Lord, spreads its rays through the whole world; yet is it only one light which is everywhere diffused: nor is the Unity of the body severed: by reason of its abundant fulness it stretches its rays into all the earth; it pours widely forth its flowing streams, yet is there one head, and one beginning, and one mother, teeming with continual fruitfulness."¹

So also St. Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho, speaks of the visible Unity of the Church as prefigured in the synagogue, and adumbrated by Pharaoh's daughter in the forty-fifth Psalm: "And to them that believe in Him (Christ) as being one soul, and one synagogue, and one Church, the word of God is spoken as to a daughter, to the Church that is, which is formed of His name, and partakes of His name (for we are all called Chris-

¹ S. Cyprian. de Unit. Ecclesiæ.

tians). The words (of the Psalm) with equal clearness declare, teaching us to forget the ancient customs of our fathers, thus saying, 'Hear, then, O daughter, and consider,' &c."¹

And also in another place he says, "As we see in the body, although the members be many in number, all are called one body, so also the people and the Church are many several men in number, but they are one Being, and are called, and addressed by one appellation."²

In like manner St. Basil says, on the twenty-ninth Psalm, "'Worship the Lord in His holy court.' It is no worship which is offered out of the Church, but only in the court of God. Do not imagine to yourselves private courts and synagogues. There is one holy court of God. The synagogue of the Jews was aforetime that court, but, after their sin against Christ, their house was left unto them desolate. Wherefore the Lord says, 'And other sheep I have which are not of this fold' (ἀλλή), meaning them who from the Gentiles were predestinated to salvation. He shows that He has another court besides that of the Jews; wherefore it is not meet to worship God out of this holy court, but within it. . . . Wherefore they that are planted in the house of the Lord, which is the Church of the living God, shall flourish in the courts of our God."³

Parallel with this are the words of Lactantius.

¹ S. Just. Mar. Dial. cum Tryph. sect. 63. ² Ibid. sect. 42

³ S. Basil. Hom. in Psalm xxviii. (al. xxix.) sect. 3.

After speaking of sects which by unbelief and schism had forfeited the name of Christian, he adds: "That, therefore, alone is the Catholic Church which retains the true worship. This is the fountain of truth, this the home of the faith, this the temple of God, into which if any man enter not, or from which if any man go out, he is a stranger to the hope of life and everlasting salvation."¹

St. Ambrose, commenting on the works of the third day, interprets the gathering together of the waters as a type of the Church. "From every valley a Catholic people is gathered together. Now there are not many congregations, but the congregation is one, the Church is one."²

Epiphanius also, after quoting the well-known text, "My dove is one," says: "For the Church is begotten of one faith, being born of the Holy Ghost, the only daughter of one only mother, and the only one to her that bare her. As many as came after her and before her were called harlots, who nevertheless were not altogether aliens from the covenant and the inheritance, but had received no dowry from the Word, nor any visitation of the Holy Ghost."³

But of all the writers of the early Church there is no one from whose works so many and so direct statements of the Unity of the Church may be

¹ Lactantius de verâ Sap. lib. iv. 30.

² S. Ambrose. Hexaemer. lib. iii. ed. Ben.

³ Epiph. adv. Hær. lib. iii. tom. ii. 6.

extracted as from those of St. Augustine. The greater part of his life was laboriously spent in converting schismatics to the Unity of the Church. His polemical writings were drawn from him by these duties, and they wear the form and exhibit the impress of this great doctrine with a severity and truth which conflict with error seems alone to give. The chief difficulty in using his testimony is, to know what to omit and what to choose. One or two passages under this head will suffice, as we shall necessarily return to his works hereafter. In his instructions to Catechumens, he says, "All those things which we see accomplished in the name of Christ in the Church of God, and throughout the whole earth, were foretold before the world; and as we read, so we see them fulfilled, whereby we are built up in faith. For once there was brought on the whole earth a deluge, for the destruction of sinners; and they who escaped in the ark exhibited a type of the Church which should be afterwards, which now floats upon the waves of this world, and is saved from drowning by the wood of Christ's cross. To Abraham, the servant of God, one single man, it was foretold that from him a people should be born, who should worship the one God in the midst of the other nations who worshipped idols; and all things which were foretold as happening to that people came to pass as they were foretold. It was prophesied also that of that people should come Christ,

the King and God of all saints, of the seed of the same Abraham according to the flesh, which He took upon him, that all who should imitate His faith might be the children of Abraham ; and so it was fulfilled. Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, who was of that family. It was foretold by the prophets that He should suffer on the cross at the hands of the same people, of the Jews from whose stock He came according to the flesh ; and so it was fulfilled. It was foretold that he should rise again : He rose, and according to the predictions of the prophets ascended into Heaven, and sent the Holy Ghost to His disciples. It was foretold not only by the prophets, but also by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, that His Church should be throughout the whole world, spread abroad by the sufferings and martyrdom of the saints. And it was foretold at a time when as yet His name was unknown among the Gentiles, and, when it was known, held in contempt ; and yet, by the power of His miracles which He wrought, both by Himself and by His servants, while these things are announced and believed, we see the prophecy even now fulfilled ; and the very kings of the earth, who before persecuted the Christians, now subjugated to the name of Christ. It was foretold that schisms and heresies should go forth out of the Church, and, under the name of Christ, wheresoever they can, seek their own and not His glory ; and these things are fulfilled.”¹

¹ S. Aug. de Catech. Rudibus, 53.

In another place he says, "The Church stands forth glorious and visible to all; for it is a city built on a hill which cannot be hid, by which Christ reigns from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth, as the seed of Abraham multiplied like the stars of heaven, and as the sand of the sea, in whom all nations are blessed."¹

"Hence it is that no man can fail to see the true Church. Therefore the Lord himself said in the Gospel, 'A city built on a hill cannot be hid.'"²

One more quotation shall close this list. Theodoret, commenting on the forty-seventh Psalm, after applying to the words, "The city of our God, even upon His holy hill," the saying of our Lord that a city built on a hill cannot be hid, goes on to say, "There is one Church in all the earth and sea, wherefore in our prayers we say (we pray) for the holy and only Catholic and Apostolic Church, from one end of the world to the other. But this (Church) is further divided according to the cities, and villages, and lands, which the prophetic language calls habitations (*βάρεις*)."³ . . . As each city has within it many several houses, but is nevertheless named one city, so are there ten thousand, yea innumerable Churches, in the isles and on the continent; but all in common make up one Church, being united by the harmony of true doctrines."⁴

¹ S. Aug. *Contra Crescon. Donat. lib. ii. 36.*

² *Contra literas Petil. ii. 74.*

³ Engl. Tr. "palaces."

⁴ Theodoret in Psalm 47.

Enough has been now adduced to show that the early Christian teachers held and taught that the one Church is the antitype of the ark, of the family of Abraham, and of the people of Israel descended from the twelve patriarchs; that it is the bride and the body of Christ—a sole, definite, visible system, easily distinguishable from all heretical and schismatical bodies; and that in this primarily consists the Unity of the Church.

This will be more manifest, if we consider for a moment with how constant and unanimous a voice the same Christian teachers declare that neither heretics, nor schismatics, are members of the one Church. They maintained not only that gainsayers of the Christian faith were cut off from the one body, but also that they who broke from the communion of the visible body, even though they held the whole doctrine of Christianity in its soundness, were also excluded from the Church.

We may exhibit the mind of the early Christians upon this point by referring to the works of St. Cyprian and St. Augustine, who were respectively engaged in reducing a schismatical Congregation to the Unity of the Church. It is to be observed that in neither instance was there any disputed point of doctrine. The whole controversy turned upon a breach which had been made in the Unity of the Catholic Church.

In the case of St. Cyprian a schism had been formed both in the African and Roman Churches,

by Felicissimus, who had been schismatically ordained deacon, and by Novatian, who claimed the see of Rome against Cornelius. It was on this occasion that St. Cyprian wrote his Treatise on the Unity of the Church, in which he says, "Whosoever is separate from the Church is joined to an adulteress; he is severed from the promises of the Church; he is an alien, a profane man, and an enemy. He can no longer have God for his Father who has not the Church for his mother. If any one who was out of the ark of Noah could escape, then he also that is not of the Church shall escape."¹

And again, in his letter to Antonianus, he says, "As for Novatian himself, concerning whom you, my dearest brother, desired to hear what heresy he had introduced, know in the first place that we ought not even to be curious to inquire what his teaching is, forasmuch as he teaches out of the Church. Whosoever and whatsoever any man may be, he is no Christian who is not in Christ's Church. Although he boast himself, and declaim with proud words of his philosophy and eloquence, he that does not hold to brotherly love, and the Unity of the Church, has forfeited even what he was before."²

In the same way, St. Augustine, writing of the Donatists, says, "Christ is both the head and the body: the only begotten Son of God is the Head;

¹ S. Cyprian. De Unitate Ecclesiæ.

² Ad Anton. Ep. lii. ed. Ben.

the body is His Church, the bridegroom and the bride, two in one flesh. Whosoever agree not with Holy Scripture, touching the Head, though they be in all places where the Church is known, are not in the Church; and again, whosoever agree with Holy Scripture touching the Head, but communicate not with the Unity of the Church, are not in the Church, because they agree not concerning the body of Christ, which is the Church, according to the testimony of Christ himself. For instance, they who do not believe that Christ came in the flesh of the Virgin Mary, of the seed of David, which the Scriptures of God declare most plainly, or that he rose again in the body in which he was crucified and buried, even though they should be found in all lands wherever the Church is found, they are therefore not in the Church, because they do not hold the Head of the Church, which is Christ Jesus; and they are not deceived by any obscurity of the Divine Scriptures, but they contradict the most notorious and plainest testimonies. Also, whosoever believe indeed that Christ Jesus came in the flesh as has been said, and rose again in the same flesh in which he was born and suffered, and is Himself the son of God, God with God, and one with the Father, the incommunicable Word of the Father, by whom all things were made, but yet so dissent from His body, which is the Church, that they do not communicate with it as it is everywhere spread abroad, and are found separated in some

particular spot, it is manifest that they are not in the Catholic Church.”¹

One more passage will bring this to an exact expression of the primitive doctrine.

St. Augustine, writing to Vincentius, says, “All the sacraments of the Lord which you still have and administer as they were wont to be held and given, even before you went out (of the Church), are derived from the Catholic Church. It is not that you therefore have not these things because you are not there whence the things you possess are derived. We do not change those things in you wherein we are with you, for in many things you are with us: for of such persons it is said, ‘that in many things they were with me;’² but we correct those things in which you are not with us, and we desire you to receive here those things which you have not where you are: for you are with us in Baptism, in the Creed, in the other mysteries of the Lord; but in the spirit of unity and the bond of peace, above all, in the Catholic Church, you are not with us.”³

From these passages it is evident that the one Church had a certain visible system of which they who were separated from it did not partake; and that this system, whatsoever it be, is the particular character to which such types and shadows as the ark, the temple, and the fold were held to refer. It was

¹ De Unitate Eccl. c. iv. tom. ix. ed. Ben.

² Psalm liv. 19; al. lv. 18.

³ S. August. ad Vincent. Rogatist. Ep. xciii. xi. t. ii. 249.

evidently something external and organic. We will examine therefore what was that condition which determined whether or no a man holding the faith and sacraments, as the Donatists held them, were within or without the Church of Christ; and with this inquiry we will close the portion of the subject which relates to the visible part of the one Church.

St. Augustine tells the Donatists that they ought not to separate themselves from the Catholic bishops even though they should fall into error:—"We may not assent to the teaching even of the Catholic bishops, if at any time they are deceived into opinions contrary to the canonical Scriptures of God; but if they should so fall into error, and yet maintain the bond of unity and charity, let the apostle's saying avail in their case: 'And if in anything ye are otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.' Now these divine words have so manifest an application to the whole Church, that none but heretics in their stubborn perverseness and blind fury can bark against them."¹

In like manner St. Cyprian:—"This unity we ought firmly to hold and contend for, especially we who are bishops, who preside in the Church, that we may exhibit the episcopate also one and undivided. . . . The episcopate is one of which each holds in full a common share."²

"Such an one is to be abhorred and avoided, being separated from the Church. Such an one is perverse, and sinneth, and is condemned of him-

¹ De Unitate Eccl. 29.

² S. Cyprian. de Unit. Eccl.

self. Does he think himself to be with Christ, who sets himself against the priests of Christ—who severs himself from the fellowship of His clergy and people? He bears arms against the Church, and strives against the dispensation of God, being an enemy of the altar, a rebel against the sacrifice of Christ, for faith perfidious, for religion sacrilegious, a disobedient servant, an impious son, an hostile brother, despising the bishops and forsaking the priests of God, he dares to set up another altar.”¹

And in the letter to Antonianus, before quoted, he says of Novatian :—“There being one Church founded by Christ, divided into many members throughout the world, also one Episcopate spread abroad in the accordant multitude of many bishops, he, after this tradition of God, after the connecting and joining together in all places of the Unity of the Catholic Church, endeavours to set up a human Church, and sends these new Apostles of his into many cities, to establish the new foundations of his institution; and seeing that there are in all provinces, and in every several city, bishops already constituted, ancient in age, in faith perfect, in straits approved, in persecution proscribed, he has the hardihood to erect other mock-bishops over them, as if he could traverse the whole world in the stubbornness of his new attempt, or break up the compactness of the ecclesiastical body by the sowing of his discord.”²

¹ S. Cyprian. de Unit. Ecclesiæ.

² Ad Anton. Ep. lii. ed. Ben.

And in his answer to Cornelius concerning the offences of Novatian, St. Cyprian says, that after making a schism at Carthage he went to Rome, and strove to do the same: "Severing a portion of the people from the Clergy, and cutting asunder the concord of a firmly united, mutually attached brotherhood. . . . He who in one place had made a deacon in opposition to the Church, in the other made a bishop. . . . They cannot remain in the Church of God who do not maintain the discipline ordained by God and the Church, by the tenor of their actions, and the peaceableness of their dispositions." ¹

And a little afterwards:—"He that is not planted in the precepts and counsels of God the Father, he only can depart from the Church; he only, after forsaking the bishops, persists in his madness among heretics and schismatics." ²

In exactly the same sense, St. Ignatius writes to the Philadelphians:—"Do not err, my brethren. If any man follow a schismatic, he shall not inherit the kingdom of God. . . . Take good heed then to partake of one Eucharist: for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup for the uniting us in his blood, one altar; as also there is one Bishop with the presbyters and deacons, my fellow servants." ³

Also, in his epistle to the Trallians, he says:—"In the same manner, let all reverence the deacons,

¹ Ad Cornel. Ep. xlix. ed. Ben.

² Ibid.

³ S. Ignat. ad Philad.

likewise also the bishops, as Jesus Christ, who is the Son of the Father; and the presbyters as the Council of God, and as the bond of the apostles: apart from these the name of Church is not.”¹ And “He that does anything without the bishop, and presbytery, and deacon, is not of a pure conscience.”²

With one passage to the same effect from St. Irenæus, we will conclude this part of the subject:—“Wherefore,” he says, “we must obey those who are in the Church: the presbyters, who have succession from the apostles, as we have shown, who, together with the succession of the Episcopate, received the sure gift of truth, according to the good pleasure of the Father; but others who withdraw from the chief succession, and assemble in any place, we ought to hold in suspicion, either as heretics and of evil opinions, or as schismatical through pride, and self-pleasing; or, again, as hypocrites who do it for the sake of gain or vain-glory. All these have fallen from the truth. The heretics, indeed, bringing strange fire to the altar of God—that is, strange doctrines—shall be consumed by fire from heaven, as Nadab and Abihu; and they that rise up against the truth, and stir up others against the Church of God, shall abide in the pit, swallowed by the yawning of the earth, as Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, with their followers; but they who rend and sever the Unity of the Church shall receive from God the same punishment as Jeroboam.”³

¹ S. Ignat. ad Trall. ² Ibid. ³ S. Iren. adv. Hær. lib. iv. 26.

and the members of the flock. This may be called its moral oneness.

(2) We have now to examine the teaching of the early Christians respecting that portion of the one Church which is invisible. They believed in the personal oneness of the whole body, and taught that the visibleness or invisibleness of its parts was an accident. This we see at once from the answer of St. Augustine to the Donatists, who charged the Catholics with making two Churches, because they taught that the visible Church is imperfect, the invisible perfect in holiness. "The Catholics," he says, "refuted this calumny about the two Churches, at the same time showing more distinctly their meaning, namely, that they did not hold that the Church which has a mixture of evil men in it is severed from the kingdom of God, where evil men shall not be mingled, but that the very same one holy Church is now under one condition and shall hereafter be under another: that it now has a mixture of evil men, and then shall not have any: as it is now mortal, because made up of mortal men, but shall then be immortal, because there shall be in it no one who can any more die even in the body; just as there were not therefore two Christs, because first he died, and afterwards dieth no more."¹ But in this invisible portion of the one Church they taught that as there were gathered in one the saints of all nations,

¹ S. Aug. Brevic. Coll. cum Donatist. c. x. tom. ix. ed. Ben.

so there were the saints of all dispensations and times.

This we will go on to show, as before, by citations.

The first we may adduce is from the Shepherd of Hermas. The allegorical form of this work, if it take from its weight as an exact exposition of doctrine, is, for the same reason, more favourable to our purpose, as giving opportunity for a full exhibition of the writer's belief.

After representing the Church as a tower built upon the water, he adds, "Hear now also concerning the stones that are in the building. The square and white stones, which agree exactly in their joints, are the apostles, and bishops, and doctors, and ministers, who through the mercy of God have come in and governed, and taught, and ministered holily and modestly to the elect of God; both they who are fallen asleep and they who yet remain, who have always agreed with them, and have had peace among themselves, and have obeyed each other. For which cause their joints exactly meet together in the building of the tower. They which are drawn out of the deep and put into the building, and whose joints agree with the other stones which are already built, are those which are already fallen asleep, and have suffered for the sake of the Lord's name."¹

And in his ninth Similitude he says, "What are these stones which were taken out of the deep and

¹ S. Hermæ Vis. iii. s. 5.

fitted into the building? The ten, said he, which were placed at the foundation are the first age, the following five-and-twenty the second, of righteous men. The next thirty-five are the prophets and ministers of the Lord; and the forty are the apostles and doctors of the preaching of the Son of God.”¹ And a little after: “And I said, Sir, show me this farther. He answered, What dost thou ask? Why did these stones come out of the deep, and were placed into the building of this tower, seeing that they long ago carried those holy spirits? It was necessary, said he, for them to ascend by water, that they might be at rest; for they could not otherwise enter the kingdom of God but by laying aside the mortality of their former life. They therefore being dead were nevertheless sealed with the seal of the Son of God, and so entered into the kingdom of God. For before a man receives the name of the Son of God, he is ordained unto death; but when he receives that seal, he is freed from death and assigned unto life. Now, that seal is the water of baptism, into which men go down under the obligation unto death, but come up appointed unto life. Wherefore to those also was this seal preached, and they made use of it, that they might enter into the kingdom of God. And I said, Why, then, Sir, did these forty stones also ascend with them out of the deep, having already received that seal? He an-

¹ S. Hermæ Simil. ix. s. 15.

swered, Because these apostles and teachers, who preached the name of the Son of God, dying after they had received His faith and power, preached to those who were dead before, and they gave this seal to them. They went down, therefore, into the water with them and again came up. But these went down whilst they were alive, and came up again alive: whereas those who were before dead went down dead, but came up alive. Through these, therefore, they received life, and knew the Son of God. For which cause they came up with them, and were fit to come into the building of the tower; and were not cut, but put in entire, because they died in righteousness, and in great purity, only this seal was wanting to them.”¹

St. Clement, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, says, “Let us stedfastly unto the blood of Christ, and see how precious unto God is his blood which was shed for our salvation, and hath brought to the whole world the grace of repentance. Let us stedfastly look at all generations, and learn that from generation to generation the Lord hath given a place of repentance to those that turned to Him. Noah preached repentance, and those that heard him were saved. Jonah preached conversion to the Ninevites, and they that repented of their sins turned away the wrath of God by their prayers and were saved, although they were aliens from God.”²

¹ S. Hermæ Simil. ix. 16. vid. S. Clem. Alex. Strom. ii. 9. 452.

² S. Clem. ad Cor. Ep. i. 7.

St. Irenæus, speaking of Abraham, teaches that he was a type of both testaments: "that he might become the father of all who follow the word of God and endure the pilgrimage of this world, that is, of all who are faithful both from the circumcision and uncircumcision; as Christ is the chief corner-stone which upholds all things, and gathers together into the one faith of Abraham those who in both Testaments are fit for the building of God."¹

The same we have already seen in Clement of Alexandria² and Nicetas.³

But the most explicit declarations of this view are to be found in the works of St. Augustine. After speaking of the book of Job, he adds, "I do not doubt that this was divinely provided, that by this one proof we might know that there may be even among other nations those who walked with God, and pleased him, and belong to the spiritual Jerusalem, which we can believe was conceded to no one but to those to whom had been divinely revealed the one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who to the saints of old was foretold as to come, even as he is declared to us as come already, that one and the same faith through Him might lead all the predestinate into the city of God, the house of God, the temple of God."⁴

¹ S. Irenæus, *adv. Hær. lib. iv. xxv.*

² S. Clem. Alex. *tom. ii. 899.* ³ S. Nicetæ *Opp. 43.*

⁴ *De Civ. Dei, lib. xviii. 47. tom. vi. ed. Ben.*

In another place, also, speaking of the saints before Christ's coming, he says, they "were citizens of that holy city," and "were members of Christ's Church, although they lived before Christ our Lord was born in the flesh. For He, the only begotten Son of God, the Word of His Father, equal and co-eternal with the Father, by whom all things were made, was made man for us, that He might be the head of the whole Church as of the whole body. So all the saints who were on earth before the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, although born beforehand, yet were united under their head to that universal body of which He is the head."¹

"The body of this head is the Church, not that which is in this place, but both in this place and in all the world; not that which is at this time, but from Abel to those who shall be born even unto the end, and shall believe in Christ: the whole people of the saints belong to one city, which city is the body of Christ, of which Christ is head. Thus also the angels are our fellow-citizens: only, as strangers, far from home, we are toiling; while they in the city await our coming. And from that city, from which we are absent far off, letters have come to us, which are the Scriptures, &c."²

And again, speaking of Canaan, he says, "There was built Jerusalem, the illustrious city of God, which served as a sign of the city which is free,

¹ De Catech. rud. 33. tom. vii.

² Enarratio in Ps. xc. Sermo 2.

which is called the Heavenly Jerusalem. Of which all sanctified men who ever were, who are, and who shall be, are citizens, and every holy spirit, even they that in the highest heavens obey God with pious devotion. Of this city the Lord Jesus Christ is king; the Word of God by whom the highest angels are ruled; the Word that took man's nature, that men also might be ruled by Him, whoshall also reign with Him in everlasting peace."¹

And in another place, "The temple of God, that is of the whole highest Trinity, is the Holy Church, namely, the Universal Church in Heaven and earth."² "This Church, therefore, which is made up of the holy angels and powers of God, will then become known to us as it really is, when we are finally joined to it to enjoy, together with it, everlasting bliss. But that Church which is afar off from it in its pilgrimage on earth, is by so much the more known to us, for that we are in it; and it is made up of men, which also we are. This Church is redeemed from all sin by the blood of the Mediator, who is without sin. Christ did not, indeed, die for the angels; and yet even the angels are partakers of this mystery, when any portion soever of mankind is redeemed and delivered from evil by His death. Since, in a certain sense, mankind returns to favour with them, after the enmity

¹ S. Aug. de Catech. rud. 36. Conf. Enarr. in Psalm xxxvi. v. Serm. 3.

² Enchiridion de Fide, Spe, et Caritate, c. lvi. tom. vi. 218.

which sin wrought between men and the holy angels; and by the same redemption of man the fall of the angels is restored; and the holy angels being taught of God, by the eternal contemplation of whose truth they are blessed, know what number of the family of man the perfection of that city waits for to fulfil its complement. Wherefore the Apostle says, 'to restore all things in Christ, which are in Heaven and which are in earth, even in Him.' For the things in Heaven are restored when the fall of angels is restored from among mankind; and things in earth are restored when men who are predestinated to eternal life are renewed from the oldness of corruption. And thus by that one sacrifice in which the Mediator was slain, which one sacrifice the many victims in the law figured forth, heavenly things were reconciled with earthly, and earthly with heavenly. As also, the Apostle says, 'It pleased Him that in Him should all fulness dwell; and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, making peace by the blood of His cross, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven.'"¹

I will add only one more passage: "Let no man be deceived. Even the things in Heaven, and the glory of the angels, and the principalities visible and invisible, unless they believe in the blood of Christ, shall be brought into judgment. He that can receive it let him receive it."²

¹ Enchirid. de Fide, &c. c. lxi.

² S. Ignat. ad Smyrnæos.

From these passages it is evident that they believed the saints of all ages to be members of the one Church, and that they who fell asleep before Christ's coming were ingrafted into it by some mysterious action in the invisible world.¹ All holy angels, and all spirits of just men made perfect, under Christ their Head, made up the unseen portion of the one Church. And of this we have very full and striking evidence in two primitive usages: one being the commemoration and commendation of the departed faithful, which in all Liturgies, as in those ascribed to St. Chrysostom, St. Basil, St. Gregory, and to the Apostles, runs nearly in the same form. In the suffrages for the whole Catholic Church they were ever wont to testify the unity of the visible and invisible parts, saying, "Further, O Lord, vouchsafe to remember them also who, from the beginning of the world, have pleased thee, the holy fathers, patriarchs, apostles, prophets, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, and every just spirit made perfect in the faith of Christ."²

The other usage to which I refer shows that they believed the visible part to have not only union, but communion of energy and worship with the part invisible. In the same Eucharistical office the Seraphic Hymn or Trisagium was always used, in which the earthly and heavenly Church were be-

¹ S. Cyril. Hier. Cat. xiii. 31, and S. Ilermas, ut supra, p. 59.

² Liturg. S. Basil. Opp. tom. ii. p. 680.

lieved to join. The following passages will represent the common faith of the early teachers on this point. Speaking of this hymn, St. Chrysostom says, "Know ye this voice? Whether is it ours or the seraphims'? Both ours and the seraphims' through Christ, who hath taken away the middle wall of partition, and reconciled things in Heaven and things in earth, making both one. For aforetime this hymn was sung in heaven alone; but when the Lord vouchsafed to come down on earth he brought down to us also this melody. Wherefore the chief priest (*i. e.* the Bishop), when he stands at the holy table, offering the reasonable service, and making oblation of the unbloody sacrifice, does not merely call us to this chant, but after naming the cherubim and seraphim, then exhorts every one to send forth this awful song, drawing our thoughts from the earth by the remembrance of those that chant with us, and almost crying to each of us and saying, 'Thou singest with the seraphim, stand then with the seraphim, spread thy wings with them, with them hover round the royal throne.'"¹ They believed that the acts of homage and adoration offered by the visible were assisted by the invisible members of the Church; that they bore a part in all the ghostly energies of that body of which the Church militant is the lower portion and Christ the common Head.

It would be very easy to multiply, to an inde-

¹ S. Chrys. Hom. vi. in Esai. t. iii. 890.

finite extent, passages which bear upon the points under consideration. But knowing how irksome it is to read over a series of quotations, I have adduced as few as possible. With this view, such only as seemed clear enough to exhibit at once the doctrine of the early Church have been selected.

Once more, let me remind the reader that the only point in which he need as yet apply his critical skill is, whether or no the following summary be a fair and exact representation of the sense of the writers here quoted.

It would seem that they believed the one Church to consist of the body of faithful of all nations and of all ages, gathered under Christ their Head; and that of this body there are two parts, one visible and one invisible, between which there nevertheless subsists the most strict and energetic personal union; that the invisible part is perfect and admitted into the fellowship of angels; and the visible imperfect, having in it a mixture of evil men, and that its unity is twofold, organic in its origin and polity, and moral in peace and charity; the visible mark or character of unity being communion with pastors deriving lawful succession from the Apostles of Christ.

CHAPTER III.

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH AS TAUGHT IN HOLY
SCRIPTURE.

HITHERTO we have attempted only to ascertain in what sense the doctrine of the Unity of the Church was held in the first ages. If the mind of the early teachers of Christ's Gospel has been faithfully exhibited, the work is thus far fulfilled. Whether the doctrine which has been exhibited be true or not is a further question, on which as yet no assertion has been made. Henceforward I shall endeavour to show by a course of direct argument what is the doctrine of Unity as revealed by Jesus Christ. If the conclusion to which our reasoning may ultimately lead us should be found to coincide with the doctrine stated in the last chapter, it will of course amount to an independent proof that the same doctrine is true. I say independent; for it must always be borne in mind that, even though the arguments of this present chapter should appear inconclusive, the statements in the last constitute

a distinct and separate fact, which, if supposed to be untrue, must be explained away or accounted for.

I will however assert nothing upon the witness of the early Church. I will not as yet use it even for the enunciation of our present argument. But, as we have ascertained by detailed examination what was the doctrine of Unity taught by the uninspired writers, we will now follow exactly the same course with the inspired teachers of the Church. The whole of this chapter, therefore, will rest upon the canonical books of Scripture.

That the Unity of the Church in some sense is a doctrine of Holy Scripture every Christian readily admits. So far there is no controversy. In what sense this Unity is to be believed, whether as wholly visible and outward, or wholly inward and invisible, or in a mixed, various, and changeable kind—this is the only dispute. It is plain, therefore, that if the text of Holy Scripture can be variously interpreted, every man will claim its witness for himself, as every several man believes the eye of a picture to be fixed on him alone. But it is obvious that to call any proposition alleged from Scripture a *proof* from Scripture, until it is first proved to be the right sense of Scripture, is only to beg the question at every step. The point at issue is plainly this: of many apparent senses of Scripture, which is the true? He that has it has Scripture on his side, and he only.

I am aware, therefore, that in professing to derive

the proof of this chapter from Holy Scripture, I lay myself open to the preliminary objection, that the words of Scripture are not proof from Scripture till I have proved that they are adduced according to the mind and intention of the writer. This, therefore, is the real point. Every thoughtful man will admit that although, in the manifold wisdom of God, his Word may have, as it were, many sides, and every saying of it many aspects, yet it can only be so as any perfect though complex figure may have a multitude of harmonizing lines, with an absolute unity. It savours, therefore, rather of shallowness and incoherence to hear men say that Holy Scripture has passages of a discrepant and various kind. God cannot belie himself. In the Divine mind all the ideas of eternal truth lie in perfect harmony; and all their reflections on the page of Holy Writ are likewise of one accord. Scattered and divergent as they may seem to our eyes, there is a point of sight from which we shall see them all rise and blend into the oneness and harmony of light.

Many as may be the apparent senses of Scripture, there can be but one true sense. Many as may be the apparent arguments and deductions from these apparent senses, there can be but one true argument and conclusion from Holy Writ. And this we will endeavour to ascertain in the article of the Unity of the Church.

I shall, therefore, on every point, first adduce the words of Scripture.

And next, in the event of doubt as to the right interpretation of any passage, such other passages of Holy Scripture as may determine its sense shall be referred to.

In a future chapter we may ascertain in what sense the uninspired writers of the Church received it. We shall use them, therefore, not as primary, but as corroborating witnesses, and may leave for candid minds to estimate the relative weight of interpretations, of which the one shall have the authority of some few, and those modern teachers, or it may be only of an individual mind, and the other the assent and corroboration of Christians from the earliest traceable antiquity. Of such an interpretation, if we may not at once assert that it must be right, we may at least believe that it is in harmony with the Catholic faith, and may be, as it has been, held without blame by the most devoted servants of God.

Ever since the fall of man there has been in the world a fellowship of God's faithful servants. In the midst of the universal sinfulness of mankind, before the flood, there was one family which still clave to God. In the second declension from God, which followed after the flood, there was yet a remnant. When chosen by the free grace of God, and called out of the midst of an idolatrous land and kindred, the family of Abraham alone was found faithful. When this family had grown into a tribe, and from a tribe into a nation, God was pleased to superadd the tokens and signatures of a visible

polity and priesthood. Thenceforward Israel was among nations a "kingdom of priests," a visible witness for God. After the various fortunes of fifteen hundred years, through which the visible national identity of Israel was preserved by the Divine Providence, God was pleased to continue the same visible witness of Himself in the Church of Christ. The Jewish Church was a typical Church so far as it was Jewish, that is, the national Israel was a figure of the spiritual, of "the Israel of God;" but it was a real Church in so far as it was the stock on which the Catholic Church of Christ was grafted. It is probable, therefore, that from the time of Noah, supposing a visible line from Noah to Abraham, and certain that from the time of Abraham, there has been in the world one, and one only body, a family, a nation, a Catholic fellowship, which, through the knowledge of God revealed to it alone, has fulfilled the office ascribed to it by St. Peter. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, a holy nation, to show forth the praises of Him that hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."

At this day there is in the world a great and visible witness for God, namely the whole of Christendom. There are not two Christendoms, but one only; and in it alone is to be found the true knowledge of God revealed to mankind by His Son Jesus Christ. In this sense of Unity, which is plainly deducible from Scripture, all will readily agree.

We may remark further, that as this visible

body has had three distinct stages or phases of development, the patriarchal, the national, and the Catholic, so under each several condition it has borne a distinct and visible character.

It has always been constituted as a Society, of which the two main conditions were subordination and charity, the two main relations of sonship and brotherhood. This was the structure of the patriarchal family, of which there was always one head by devolution of the right of primogeniture, and one body consisting of many members. Towards this head was the duty of subordination as of sons to a father, and towards the members of the body, of charity as of brethren one to another.

But when the family multiplied into a nation this organised system was more strongly developed. The bonds of relation by kindred were so lengthened out as to lose in the closeness of their hold, therefore God was pleased to strengthen them by a direct institution. A stronger hand was needed to wield a nation than a family. For a people of twelve tribes, a more visible structure and a more consolidated polity was required. And at this time we find a lawgiver and a priest ordained by God himself, the one to be for ever represented by the succession of the priesthood, the other by the judges and the kings.

The civil and sacerdotal polity of the Jewish nation is so legible in every part of Holy Writ, that no one has ever called it into doubt: the only ques-

tion that can be raised is, whether that polity was an economy to meet the temporary condition of a particular people, or an institution of Divine wisdom necessary to the well-being of mankind, and therefore designed to continue in the Christian Church through all ages, to the end of the world.

In answering this question it will be well to remark on the nature of the chief types by which the Catholic Church was foreshadowed. The earliest is the ark of Noah; the most visible, the family of Abraham and the nation of Israel. In both these we see not more the character of unity than of structure and organisation. The ark was built by the express and detailed instruction of God; the distinctive features of the Jewish economy were of divine institution, from the seal of the Covenant given to Abraham, to the pattern shown to Moses in the Mount.

It is plain, then, that part of the moral instruction of these types was to foreshadow a mystery yet to come, the prominent character of which should be a structure and an organisation instituted by God himself.

The same may be traced in the language of the prophets: as where Daniel passes from the four visible empires to a fifth, which is the visible Kingdom of God; where Isaiah foretells the peace of the Church under the image of a city built of precious stones; in the whole implied meaning of the words, "Behold I lay in Sion, for a foundation, a

stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation;”¹ and in the prophecy of the head-stone which in due time should be brought forth with shouting.² All these foreshadow a structure or polity.

Other types (such as the stone which grew into a great mountain, in the vision seen by Daniel, and the figurative language of the Psalms and Song of Songs, where the Church is spoken of as the beloved and the bride) are designed to express Unity, together with some characteristic attribute, such as growth and extension, or purity and love to Christ the Spouse. But as these bring out each one some peculiar property of the Church, so do the ark and the people of Israel and the like bespeak an organised system.

We may add also the parables of our Lord, in which the Church is everywhere typified as one organised body: as for instance, those in which He likened the Kingdom of Heaven to an household, to a net, to a grain of mustard seed, to a vine. In all these continuity of parts and unity of structure are distinctly implied. To the same effect also are our Lord’s words, when He applied to himself the prophecy of the stone which the builder refused; and when He said to Simon, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church.” All these things would prepare us for some visible organised system instituted by God in fulfilment of the types, and ordained in the stead of His former economies.

¹ Isaiah xxviii. 16.

² Zech. iv. 7.

I. Now if we examine Holy Scripture simply as an authentic historical document, in which the beginnings of the Church are narrated, we shall find,—

First, that by the baptism of St. John Baptist a body of people was gathered together for the service of the Messiah. What the circumcision of Abraham was to the Mosaic polity the baptism of St. John was to the Church of Christ.

Next, by baptism in the name of Christ, the first foundations of the Church were laid. “Then they that gladly received his (Peter’s) word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. . . . And they continued stedfastly in the Apostle’s doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.”¹ This is the first time we read of the Christian Church as a body already in being. Our Lord had plainly spoken of it in His benediction to St. Peter,² but He spoke of it in promise and in prophecy. As yet it did not exist separate from the elder Church. But in the book of Acts we find His words rising up into a reality. The Church of Christ had passed into being. The faithful remnant were knit into one body, compacted by one faith and one common bond of baptism into Christ. And thenceforward the Church is spoken of as a phenomenon well known, and as a body conspicuously visible. It was a community existing in Jerusalem, and worshipping in the temple;

¹ Acts ii. 41, 42, 47.

² St. Matth. xvi. 18; xviii. 17.

and yet so distinct from the polity and system of the Jews, as to admit its members by a formal seal of initiation in the Name of God. The Apostles baptized out of God's elder system into the new. From this time we find persecution arising against "the Church;" Saul making havock of "the Church;" prayer being made for Peter by "the Church;" Herod vexing certain of "the Church."¹ And, again, we read of the Apostles ordaining elders "in every Church;" of "the Churches" throughout all Judea having rest; of Paul going throughout Syria confirming "the Churches;" of "the Churches" being established in the faith. And throughout the New Testament Scripture, in more than a hundred places, "the Church" is in like manner spoken of.

It is plain that this refers to some one visible organised system, having unity in plurality, and being therefore spoken of as existing at one and the same time, in one and in many places. For this reason the Apostolic Epistles bear the name and address of each several Church, and to the Church in each several place; and the Church is spoken of as in the house of Chloe, or of Gaius, of Philemon, and Nymphas, and the like. This is enough to show that by "the Church" was intended some newly developed system, which at that time began to take the place of God's previous economies, and to overspread both Judea and the countries round about. Thus far we have evidence rather of the

¹Acts viii. 1, 3; xii. 1, 5.

fact, that such a system was then founded, than of the nature and kind of the system itself. We see that it was a visible substantive body, united by bonds and symbols, and differenced from all other communities partly by the rejection of their respective characteristics, and partly by the peculiar nature of its own.

II. We will next examine what the inspired writers taught concerning the Church.

They explain its nature chiefly by the use of two metaphors—a building and a body.

St. Paul draws a direct parallel between the Church of the Jews and the Church of Christians. "Every house is builded by some man, but He that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after. But Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house are we."¹ As he says to the Corinthians, "Ye are God's building;"² and again, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God;"³ and "the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."⁴ "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost."⁵ "Ye are the temple of the living God."⁶ "To whom coming," says St. Peter, "as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house."⁷ Again St. Paul says, "Ye are

¹ Heb. iii. 4, 5, 6.

² 1 Cor. iii. 9.

³ 1 Cor. iii. 16.

⁴ 1 Cor. iii. 17.

⁵ 1 Cor. vi. 19.

⁶ 2 Cor. vi. 16.

⁷ 1 St. Pet. ii. 4, 5.

no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord : in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”¹

In these passages St. Paul and St. Peter teach us that what the temple in Jerusalem was to the Divine presence which dwelt in it, the fellowship of Christians is now to the indwelling presence of the Holy Ghost.

The Jewish temple was a type, being a structure of dead matter made with hands ; the Church of Christ is the antitype, being an aggregation of living and spiritual natures gathered into one, and held together in the same relation to Christ, the chief corner-stone.

It is unnecessary to raise a question whether or no from this passage the visible Unity of the Church is to be proved, although it would seem that a congregation of living men is as visible an object as a pile of lifeless stones. Let us take only what all admit. Let us say that these passages prove only the spiritual and invisible Unity of the Church. Now no man can deny that the type of a building or temple shadows forth the properties of structure, and mutual relation of parts, and

¹ Ephes. ii. 19, 22.

therefore of order and combination on some common principle no less than the idea of unity. Nay, I think, candid reasoners will admit these to be the chief and prominent ideas expressed by the analogy. However, for our present argument, it is enough that these be admitted as features in the prophetic types and in the language of the Apostles.

The other figure commonly used by St. Paul to express the nature of Christ's Church, is that of a body.

To the Ephesians he says, that God "hath put all things under His feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."¹ And to the Colossians, "He is the head of the body, the Church;"² and a little afterwards, "holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God."³ "We being many are one body in Christ."⁴ "As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."⁵ "Ye are the body of Christ and members in particular."⁶

¹ Ephes. i. 22, 23.

² Coloss. i. 18 and 20; and iii. 15.

³ Coloss. ii. 19.

⁴ Rom. xii. 5.

⁵ 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

⁶ 1 Cor. xii. 27.

To the Ephesians, he says, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore, he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh in-

crease of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”¹ So to the Romans he says, “As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we being many are one body in Christ; and every one members one of another.”² And carrying out the same idea, he says to the Corinthians, that there are diversities of gifts, administrations, and operations; the manifestation of the Spirit being given to each man severally for his respective ministry in the edifying of the one body. “God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets?”³—all parts of the body being thus tempered together with a manifold and various endowment of powers and functions, distributed to each several member for the interchange of service and reciprocal ministry, and for the ultimate well-being of the whole.

(1) In these passages, and in many more, St. Paul shadows forth the Church under the figure of a body, and then raises the figure into a reality, so that the example or argument passes by a sort of transfiguration into the mystery of Christ’s mystical body, as when he says, “We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.”⁴ And to this transcendent communion he likens the unity of holy

¹ Ephes. iv. 1—16.

² 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29.

³ Rom. xii. 4, 5.

⁴ Ephes. v. 30.

wedlock. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and his Church."¹ From all this, I say, it is most evident that St. Paul intends to express not more the Unity of Christ's body than the organic structure of the Church.

(2) But in these quotations we have arrived at a further truth, namely, that the ministry is of Divine origin and authority. St. Paul ascribes the office of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher, &c., to a direct institution of the Holy Spirit. This great fact runs through the whole inspired document. First, we read that Christ Himself constituted twelve to be his Apostles; next, that they by a deliberate action and purpose filled up the place of Judas with a successor to his apostolic powers; then that they ordained elders in every Church. We find St. Paul giving charge to the elders of the Asiatic Churches to feed the flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers: we find him laying hands on Timothy, and constituting Titus to the oversight of Crete, and instructing them in their spiritual government of the Church, and providing for the multiplication and succession of pastors. If the ministry be not of Divine origin, then surely nothing can be. Neither Baptism nor the Eucharist has more, and

¹ Ephes. v. 31, 32.

more self-evident proofs of being instituted by the act and continued by the will of Christ and of God.

(3) But besides this we learn from the words of St. Paul above cited, that the ministry of the Church was divinely appointed to be as it were the spinal chord of the whole body. It is the very condition of structure and organisation, and the divinely ordained means of growth and unity of life. I raise no question here as to the form and aspect of the polity of the Church, and speak only of the Succession of pastors deriving power through the Apostles from Christ Himself. That this is the *differentia* of the one Church as compared with other congregations of men is evident, as we may read in Holy Scripture. We have seen that the Church "continued stedfastly in the Apostles' fellowship." We read of schisms arising in the Churches of Galatia and Corinth, which were formed by the congregating of unstable men round teachers who professed to be Apostles of Christ. The Church of Ephesus was commended for trying them which said they were Apostles, and were not, and finding them to be liars.¹ St. Peter also writes, "There were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways," &c.² St. John, speaking of the fore-

¹ Rev. ii. 2.

² 2 St. Pet. ii. 1. 2.

runners of Anti-Christ in his day, says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us."¹ "These be they," says St. Jude, "who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."² And St. Paul, "For first of all, when ye come together in the Church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it; for there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."³ "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls as they that must give account."⁴ "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you. And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, and be at peace among yourselves."⁵

From these passages it is plain that the divinely appointed ministry of the Church was the outward bond which knit together the members of Christ in one visible communion: that it was in fact the test and seal, or, so to speak, the Sacrament of order in the Church, being the idea correlative with subordination. From this also we see that they who, by false teaching or insubordinate temper, violated the Unity of the faith, or of the Christian family, ceased by that act to be any longer members of the

¹ 1 St. John ii. 19. ² St. Jude 19. ³ 1 Cor. xi. 18, 19.

⁴ Heb. xiii. 17. ⁵ 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.

body. This severing from the body of Christ was twofold: either wilful, as in the case of heretics and schismatics, who separated themselves from the Church, for instance the Nicolaitans¹ and the Gnostic teachers; or penal, as in the case of the excommunicated Corinthian, who was "put away" from the body of the Church, and delivered by them "unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus:"² and of Hymenæus and Alexander, whom St. Paul delivered unto Satan, "that they might learn not to blaspheme."³ To any one who will consider the nature of excommunication, and the authority by which it was inflicted, it will be abundantly plain that it signifies a judicial separation, by authoritative sentence of the spiritual rulers, from the body of Christ's Church. And this will be sufficient proof of the nature of the Church as recorded in Scripture, that it was a visible body, having an exact internal organisation, and subjected to constituted rulers. We learn also that the Unity of that body is twofold: one kind of Unity being objective, consisting in its faith, sacraments, and organised polity; the other subjective, in the peace and brotherly love of the several members.

In the foregoing pages I have gathered together such passages of Holy Writ as declare to us the nature of the one visible Church; but there are

¹ Rev. ii. 6.

² 1 Cor. v. 5.

³ 1 Tim. i. 20.

still other declarations of the inspired writers which must be taken into view to complete the full meaning of "the Holy Church."

In writing to the Ephesians, St. Paul says that God having raised Christ from the dead, "set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come;"¹ and also to the Philippians that God had "exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."²

To the Colossians he writes, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist, and He is the Head of the body which is the Church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell. And having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him, to reconcile all things unto Himself

¹ Ephes. i. 20, 21.

² Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11.

by Him, I say whether they be things in earth or things in heaven.”¹

And in like manner, teaching the Hebrew Christians how high was their calling in Christ, he says, “Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel.”²

From these places it is evident that the incarnation and passion of the Son of God is the mysterious cause of a new order, in which even unseen and heavenly beings are partakers. The Father sent Him into the world to redeem and to regenerate the creation of God, “that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth.”³ How or in what manner the heavenly orders are reconstituted in a new order; whether the original sin of angels was a refusal of homage to the anticipated mystery of the Incarnate Son; whether the elect angels, as they yielded adoration to the Word made flesh, so are now partakers of a new summing up of

¹ Coloss. i. 15—20.

² Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24.

³ Ephes. i. 10.

God's creatures under a New Head¹ in Christ Jesus, we know not. Most evident it is that they, together with the spirits of just men made perfect, are members of Christ's mediatorial kingdom, and gathered together with the visible Church of Christ under one Head in a wonderful order.² They are members with us of the one mystical body, of which part is seen and part unseen.

We have now gone through the writings of the inspired teachers of the Church, so as to leave few passages, that I am aware of, bearing explicitly on the subject, untouched. And the result to which we have come is this—that the Church of Christ is a body of which one part is visible, the other invisible; that it is constituted of angels and men; and that of these some are already perfect, and some in their imperfect state; that the visible part of the one body, here on earth, is the congregation of Christian men who are under the rule of pastors deriving their succession from the Apostles of Christ.

I am not aware that I have strained the proof of any one point in this argument. I might have made it even more definite in some of its features, but I had rather draw a conclusion which should fall far within the circumference of the premises than exceed their limits by never so small an excess.

On a principle which must be obvious, I forbear

¹ ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι.

² Collect for the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels.

attempting to deduce from Scripture anything more than the outline of this doctrine. It is plainly not less unreasonable to look to Holy Scripture for an anticipated resolution of modern controversies than to search in it for a proof of its own inspiration. How, for instance, should we expect to find the Apostles in their own lifetime adjusting questions about the validity or invalidity of the succession? It is plain that they ordained a system in the world, which contained in it the germ of a continuous development. The fact is sufficient proof of their intention. The founding of the Church contains in it the principle of succession, as the birth of a living soul contains a continuous personal identity. Sufficient has, I trust, been adduced to prove that the teaching of the inspired and uninspired writers is in exact agreement.

Unless it can be shown that I have misrepresented the meaning of the Fathers or of the Apostles, I may now assume that the article in the Creed is the *enunciation*, the teaching of the Fathers the *exposition*, and the witness of Holy Scripture the *proof* of the doctrine of the Unity of the Church as here expressed.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FORM AND MATTER OF UNITY.

WE have now ascertained, at least in outline, the nature of the Unity of the Church. If I may be allowed to use a word already forced by the poverty of our abstract language upon a well-known writer,¹ I would say that the doctrine of unity contains the ideas both of *oneliness*, and of oneness.

The *oneliness* of the Church is that which is expressed in the Creed preserved in the works of Alexander by the *μίαν καὶ μόνην ἐκκλησίαν*, the one, and one only Church. The oneness relates to its essential nature, and to the mode in which it is one.

Of unity, in the sense that there is one and one only Church, enough has been already said: but of unity which is the cause and reason of the *one-*

¹ Cudworth, *Intell. System*, p. 633, fol. 1678.

liness of the Church, we have as yet spoken only in a broad and general way. In the present chapter, therefore, we will take up this part of the subject.

I have already said that the unity of the visible part of the Church may be divided into a twofold kind, namely, organic or objective, and moral or subjective; and I will endeavour to show the nature of these two several aspects of unity, and the reason for so distinguishing them.

By the organic unity of the Church, may be understood the oneness of the form and constitution which God by direct act and inspiration has ordained; as we speak of the organic nature of the world or of man, distinct from the powers of life and moral action. I would therefore use the term as co-extensive with the whole objective economy of God; including all that He has taught and ordained, or, as we are wont commonly to say, both the doctrine and discipline of the Church; and excluding all that relates to the subjective nature, condition, and probation of man.

By the moral unity of the Church may be understood the oneness of the subjective nature, condition, and character of mankind, wrought out and maintained through the organic unity of the whole dispensation; as we distinguish between the moral character and habits of a family, and the lineal descent and collateral relations which determine the unity and identity of the race.

We will now take these two points in order.

I. And first, under the idea of organic unity, we will comprehend both the doctrine and discipline of the Church. In exact truth, this common division is illogical, inasmuch as the several members will be found reciprocally to include a portion of the same idea. As, for instance, it does not readily appear whether we ought to refer the Holy Sacraments to the head of doctrine, or of discipline. They are doctrinal so far as they are the matter of doctrine, *the sac.* and have a symbolical aspect to adumbrate the mystery of redemption; they are disciplinary so far as *it is ha* they consist of visible signs which form the central *by which* points of the Liturgy, and order of the Church. The same may be said of the Sacramental Rites, such as Orders, Confirmation, and the like. If they are disciplinary in so far as they constitute the outward grades and system of the Church, they are no less doctrinal in their symbolical aspect, which expresses the derived authority of Christ, and the presence of the Holy Ghost. *we find*

It would be more strictly true and philosophical, if we were to say that God has revealed His saving truth to mankind partly by word, and partly by figure; that He has partly spoken and partly shadowed forth the mystery of salvation: for if the words of the Gospel are the words of eternal life through the blood-shedding of Christ, certainly Holy Baptism, and the Holy Eucharist, and Holy Orders, and Confirmation, and the succession of the Apostles, and the polity of the Church, are adumbrations as well as effectual means of spiritual

birth, and food, and strength, and authority, and of the presence of Christ, and of the fatherhood of God. It is the one truth indivisible, now spoken, now shadowed forth, now traced invisibly in the reason, now shown visibly to the eye: doctrine and discipline, faith and sacraments, the Gospel and the Church are, as it were, one Christ now manifesting Himself, now conveying Himself away from sense.

But with this understanding of the terms the popular division is sufficiently exact for our present purpose. We will therefore proceed to speak of the unity of doctrine and discipline, including under the former the Faith and Sacraments, and under the latter the succession and polity of the Church, of which the sacramental rites are the bands and junctures.

We say, then, that the doctrine and discipline of the whole Church is one.

Of the unity of doctrine, except so far as it is a divine condition to the unity of discipline, I have no intention or need to speak. All Christians agree in holding, both that a right Faith is a necessary condition for Baptism, and for continuance in the communion of the Church; and also that by departing from the unity of the Faith a man departs from the unity of the body of Christ.

That the Apostles in all places taught one and the same doctrine, that the deposit of the Faith has been handed down by Catholic tradition whole and undiminished to this day, that an inward sub-

mission of mind to this one true objective mystery is necessary to salvation, we all believe. We hold also that churches, as men, may fall from the unity of the body by falling from the unity of the Faith: or, in other words, that heresy severs a member, whether it be a church or a man, from the one visible body. The objective forms, then, in which this unity consists are the doctrine of Faith as revealed by Christ through His Apostles, the Holy Sacraments and Sacramental Rites, namely, Holy Baptism, by which men are first grafted into one body, and the Holy Eucharist, by which men are nurtured and kept in the same: the imposition of hands with prayer, which are the essential form and matter in Holy Orders, and in Confirmation: the authoritative benediction of the Church at Holy Matrimony, and all things which the Apostles taught or ordained as matters of immutable obligation.

We are now chiefly concerned with that part of organic unity which consists of discipline.

In the second chapter we saw that the limits of the visible Church are determined by an organised polity—in the last that this polity consists in the oversight and government of a divinely appointed ministry, deriving its succession from the Apostles. But hitherto I have abstained from defining its exact form; the real and only important principle being contained in the identity of the visible Church in all ages with that which the Apostles founded.

It is evident that mere likeness or correspondence in form cannot constitute this identity. There must be some essential condition which shall make it to be the true lineal descendant and lawful representative of the original body. It is with the Church as with a family or a kingdom. Their identity depends on the direct and lawful devolution of the rights of primogeniture and of prerogative. No assumption by any other body of name, title, and customs without this continuity would make it one with them. A kingdom may undergo many political mutations. It may lapse from a despotism to a democracy, and yet retain its personality. Athens under the kings, decennial and annual archons, was yet one and the same people. It is conceivable that the Church also might retain its identity, even though its polity were indefinitely changed ; I say it is conceivable, in so far as the intrinsic nature of any form of polity is concerned, for its polity is to its true identity what the countenance or the figure of a man is to his complex and true identity of person. And therefore they do but miss the point, and perplex the subject, who contend for or against Episcopacy or Presbytery as such. Saving always the basis of identity, God might have been pleased to leave the polity of the Church without express form, to find its own level, and take its own shape, moulding it here and there, from time to time, by the unseen pressure of His overruling hand, as He is wont to do in the kingdoms of the earth. The Church retaining its transmitted

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authority might, had He so willed, have put on a succession of new aspects, and conformed itself to the changeable politics of the world. It might have been the ductile element, instead of the fixed mould of human society. But it is a fact in God's work of regenerating the world that He has cast His Church into one definite shape. Like the bodily structure of man, it might, perhaps, have been otherwise arranged, but, without a divine interposition, it now cannot be. There is only one, universal, necessary type.

We will therefore go on to investigate the exact nature of this polity or organisation. And as in the last chapter we assumed for the enunciation of our subject the article of the Catholic Creed, so in this we will assume as a fact the polity of the Catholic Church as it now exists, and by tracing its course upwards to the origin of the Church, endeavour to ascertain in what the essence of this organic polity consists.

(1) The first fact, then, which strikes the eye at this time in the world, is a visible body of many members professing lineal descent and succession from the Apostles of Christ. We find this body in the extreme East and West, of a manifest and immemorial antiquity; bearing the stamp and character of ages long gone by; and agreeing universally in the chief and primary elements of its organised system. The Catholic Church of this day is self-evidently one. It has a correlation of

parts and a central unity which are the properties of an individual being. Throughout all its subdivisions into Patriarchates and Primacies, subject or independent, Metropolitan or Archiepiscopal, throughout its several Episcopal jurisdictions; and even in the offices of the Priesthood, and the functions of the Diaconate, there is a series, and order of place and power. From the Patriarch of Rome¹ to the acolyte there is a subordination of

¹ The precedence granted to the Church of Rome was given according to the rule observed throughout the whole empire. The seats of the chief civil power were also the sees of the chief spiritual authorities. (See Bingham, B. ix. i. iv.) The first city of the empire conferred on the Church of that city its own precedence. The basis of the greatness of the Roman Church was therefore partly civil and partly ecclesiastical, using that word as defined in the text, and not to express a directly divine or apostolical appointment. Rome was the culminating point of civilization and empire, the political centre, and the focus of all lines of communication and authority. It was the richest and the most numerous Church, and therefore readily became the first in rank. This is what St. Irenæus intends by "*propter potiore principalitatem.*" Adv. Hær. lib. iii. 3. For this reason, also, it would seem, the two great apostles of the circumcision and the uncircumcision bestowed on it so much labour. All these things gave it a natural precedence, and yet we find Tertullian speaking of it only as one of the chief apostolic sees. De Præscr. xxxvi. The attempt to found its precedence on a divine appointment through St. Peter is not a primitive tradition. St. Cyprian, in the third century, is the first that calls it the "*Chair of Peter,*" (Ep. lv.,) and yet in his mouth it was only a title, not a prerogative. In the Novatian and Donatist schisms, the succession and origin of the Roman Church, being often forced into argument, began to assume a peculiar aspect. The nature of the controversy drew from St. Cyprian, St. Optatus, and St. Augustine, the kind of appeal and statement on which, in after ages, so much has been built. The whole class

degrees; and in all the parts of the whole body there is an organic unity. A distinction must here be drawn between what is of ecclesiastical and what is of apostolical origin. The precedence of patriarchal and archiepiscopal sees rests on the canons of the

of passages have one plain interpretation. They assert the genuineness of the succession derived from St. Peter and St. Paul, not against other genuine successions in the Catholic Church, but against the schismatical rivals. Thence the chair of Peter and the succession of Peter passed into a common title for the Roman succession, and by degrees began to be assigned as the ground of precedence in the Western Church.

When the seat of empire was transferred to Constantinople the fathers in the Council of Constantinople assigned to that Church as the Church of the new Rome a precedence next after the old, proving thereby on what it was originally grounded. The decree is as follows: "Let the Bishop of Constantinople have the place of chief honour after the Bishop of Rome, because Constantinople is new Rome." Canon. 3 Bevereg. Pandectæ, vol. i. 89. And the Council of Chalcedon confirmed and extended these privileges, adding the reason more at large. "The fathers reasonably assigned the chief privileges to the throne (see) of old Rome, because that city had the imperial power: and, moved by the same regard, the hundred and fifty holy bishops assigned equal privileges to the most holy throne of new Rome, rightly deciding that the city which is honoured with the empire and senate ought to enjoy the same privileges as the elder Rome which had the imperial government," &c. Can. xxviii. Bev. Pand. vol. i. 145. So Concil. in Trullo. Can. 36. The ninth canon of the Council of Chalcedon extends the privileges of Constantinople beyond any that Rome had enjoyed. The Roman jurisdiction has no divine, *i. e.*, direct or apostolical foundation. This may be seen in Mr. Palmer's masterly chapter on the Roman Pontiff, *Treatise on the Church*, vol. ii. p. 501; in Barrow on the Pope's Supremacy; and in Nectarius *adversus Imp. Papæ*; or in the work of Nilus, archbishop of Thessalonica, *de Primatu Papæ Rom.*

Church, and arose by the force of accidents, separable, before the event, from all sees alike. Patriarchs and Metropolitans were the bishops either of the greatest or of the oldest sees. Civil precedence is the basis of the Patriarchal, and spiritual maternity of the Metropolitan, authority. But the basis of all apostolical power, whether in Patriarchs, Metropolitans, or archbishops, is the one episcopate, of which indivisible authority all bishops are each one severally and in full partakers. Howsoever complex, therefore, the aspect of the Church Catholic may have become by the lapse and pressure of ages, its complexity may be resolved into the simple form of polity ordained by the Apostles. The threefold orders of bishops, priests, and deacons, which are at this day found in all churches, are the groundwork and essential element of the whole organised system. It is therefore unnecessary for our present purpose to trace the ecclesiastical development of the Church, and to ascertain at what time the several patriarchal and metropolitan privileges were conferred. It is enough to take the apostolical element of the ecclesiastical system, and to trace it upward to its beginning.

(2) Every one, how slightly soever read in the history of the Church, is aware that from the present day upward to the time of Constantine, there has existed a successive ministry in the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons. At the time of the Council of Nice the episcopate of the whole Church

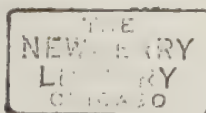
consisted of about 1800 bishops, *i. e.* 1000 in the Eastern, and 800 in the Western Churches.

Our examination, therefore, may be confined to the three centuries between Constantine and the Apostles of Christ.

In tracing out this subject I shall first adduce proofs from uninspired writers, and reserve the proofs of Holy Scripture to the last.

1. § To begin, then, with the uninspired writers, we may adduce from the third century a letter of the clergy of the Roman Church to St. Cyprian. This epistle was written on the death of Fabianus, the Bishop of Rome, and during the vacancy of the see. It is inscribed by "the Presbyters and Deacons at Rome to Pope Cyprian." They say, concerning a case of difficulty then before them, "Although a greater necessity to defer this case lies upon us, seeing that, since the death of Fabianus, by reason of the difficult condition of affairs and of the time, we have as yet no bishop appointed to administer these things, and by his authority and counsel to take cognizance of the lapsed brethren. Although in a matter of this great moment we are content with what you have expressed, that the peace of the Church should be first maintained, and then account taken of the lapsed after a conference of the bishops, priests, and deacons, together with the confessors and the faithful laity, &c."¹ We find, also, St. Cyprian giving account of his correspondence with the clergy of Rome to the clergy of his own

¹ Ep. xxxi. ed. Ben.



Church at Carthage, and inscribing his letter "to his brethren the Priests and Deacons."¹ Throughout all his works this threefold order is everywhere recognised. A remarkable incidental proof of this is to be found in his letter to Rogatianus, a bishop, against whom one of his own deacons had behaved contumaciously. He commends him for his gentleness, "seeing that by virtue of the episcopate and authority of the see he had the power to inflict summary punishment"² upon a deacon. Against a presbyter the apostle forbids an accusation to be received except before two or three witnesses.³

With this distinct use of the titles St. Cyprian says: "Thence (from the mission of the Apostle St. Peter) through the changes of time and succession the ordination of bishops and rule of the Church runs down (to us), that the Church should be built upon the bishops, and every act of the Church be controlled by them as rulers;"⁴ whom in another epistle he describes as "a sacerdotal college,"⁵ "a single episcopate of many bishops diffused abroad in a numerous and accordant multitude,"⁶ in whose unity the Church is united, who have of God an absolute power, but may neither judge nor be judged by a colleague; forasmuch as "all alike wait for the judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone has power both to advance them to the government of His Church and to judge of their actions."⁷

¹ Ep. xxxii. ed. Ben.

² Ad Rogat. Ep. lxxv. ed. Ben.

³ 1 Tim. v. 19.

⁴ Ep. xxvii. ed. Ben.

⁵ Ep. lii.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Concilium Carthag. p. 330.

So also Origen, himself a Presbyter, says, "More is required of me than of a deacon, and more of a deacon than of a layman. But from him to whom is committed the chief power in the Church over us all, still more is required."¹ And in his homilies on St. Matthew, "the bishop, priest, and deacon are a symbol of realities correspondent with their names."² So, in another place, he likens the deacons who maladministered the Church goods to the money-changers in the temple, and bishops and priests who committed the Church of Christ to unworthy men, to the sellers of doves;³ so, in many places, the three orders are recognised. Also, Tertullian, whose witness runs into the second century, says of baptism, that "the power of giving it is in the chief priest, which is the bishop: thence the Presbyters and deacons have it; and yet they may not give it without the authority of the bishop, for the dignity of the Church, in preserving which peace also is preserved."⁴ And speaking of the confusion among the heretical sects, he says, "Advancement is nowhere so easy as in the rebels' camp, where to be is to be meritorious. Therefore to-day one man is bishop, to-morrow another; to-day he is a deacon who to-morrow is a reader;

¹ Orig. Hom. in Jer. 2, quoted by Beveridge, Cod. Can. Eccl. Prim. Vind. &c. c. x. 3.

² Orig. in Matth. tom. xiv. 22.

³ Ibid. tom. xvi. 22. See also Hom. 2. in Cantic. Cantico.

⁴ De Baptismo, c. 17.

to-day a Presbyter who to-morrow is a layman, for even to laymen they commit sacerdotal functions.”¹

We now come into the second century, in which we may first cite St. Clement of Alexandria, who, in a remarkable passage, sufficiently shows what was the polity of the Church in his times. He says, “The grades of promotion in the Church, that is, of bishops, priests, and deacons, are imitations, I conceive, of the angelic glory.”² So also Hegesippus, who lived in the early part of the second century, the first writer of ecclesiastical history, tells us that “the Corinthian Church continued in the right faith until the episcopate of Primus:”³ also, speaking of Jerusalem, he says, “After the martyrdom of James the Just, next after his uncle, Symeon, the son of Cleopas, was made bishop;” and immediately after, “Thebuthis, because he was not made bishop, began secretly to corrupt (the Church).”⁴ In this way he always distinguishes the episcopate from the other orders. As Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, also says, “Polycarp, who was Bishop of Smyrna, and a martyr, and Thrascas, Bishop of Eumenia, and a martyr; why should I speak of Sagaris, who was also bishop and martyr?” He calls himself also bishop, as Ignatius does: “Seven of my kindred,” he says, “were bishops, and I the eighth.”⁵

¹ De præser. Hæret. c. xli. ² Strom. vi. c. 13. p. 793. Potter.

³ Biblioth. Vet. Patrum. Gallandii, tom. ii. 64; also Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. c. xxii. ⁴ Ibid. 65. ⁵ Ibid. 161.

We may next cite St. Irenæus, who was of the same age with Polycarp, and his disciple. Speaking of St. Paul's journey through Asia Minor,¹ he says, "The bishops and presbyters who came from Ephesus and the other neighbouring cities, being called together at Miletus, because he was hastening to keep the Pentecost at Jerusalem,"² he charged them and foretold what should befall him. In another place he writes, "Every one who desires to see the truth may readily perceive the tradition of the Apostles, which is manifested in all the Church; and we are able to enumerate those who were ordained bishops in the Churches by the Apostles, and their successors even to our day."³ "But since it would be too long a work in such a book as this to enumerate the successions of all the Churches, we confound all (heretics) by exhibiting the tradition of the great, and most ancient, and well-known Church, which by the two glorious Apostles, Peter and Paul, was founded and established at Rome, the tradition which it has from the Apostles, and the faith which is declared to all men, and has come down by the succession of bishops to us,"⁴ &c. And immediately after, "The blessed Apostles, therefore, having founded and instructed the Church, committed the office of the episcopate to Linus. Of this Linus St. Paul makes mention in his Epistle to Timothy. His successor was Anacletus. After him, in the third place from

¹ Acts xx. 17.² S. Iren. lib. iii. xiv. 2.³ Ibid. lib. iii. 3.⁴ Ibid. s. 2.

the Apostles, Clement obtained the episcopate, who had both seen the blessed Apostles and had conversed with them."¹ "To this Clement succeeded Evaristus, and to Evaristus Alexander; and then the sixth from the Apostles, Sixtus, was appointed; and after him Telesphorus, who suffered martyrdom in a glorious manner; and then Hyginus, afterwards Pius, after whom Anicetus. After Soter had succeeded to Anicetus, Eleutherius, who now, the twelfth from the Apostles, holds the episcopate."² We know from Eusebius that, in the episcopate of Eleutherius, Florinus was deposed from the order of Presbyters in the Roman Church for heresy.³ And in the time of Cornelius, who was the eighth bishop after Eleutherius, the Presbyters in Rome were forty-four in number.⁴

There is another document of the same age which will exhibit the distinction of these offices. In the letter of the Christians at Lyons, addressed to the Churches of Asia and Phrygia, they speak of their Bishop as "the blessed Pothinus, to whom was intrusted the office of the episcopate in Lyons."⁵ Speaking of Irenæus, in a letter to Eleutherius, they say, "For if we conceived that rank conferred merit upon any, we would earnestly commend him to you as a Presbyter of the Church, in which order he is." In this they observe the distinction of the two orders with great exactness;

¹ S. Iren. lib. iii. c. 3. s. 3.

² Ibid.

³ Hist. Eccl. lib. v. 15.

⁴ Ibid. lib. vi. 43.

⁵ Ibid. lib. v. 1.

as also in all parts of the epistle. For Eleutherius, who was a bishop, they call "Father," Irenæus only "brother" and "colleague," and "fellow," with themselves. Eusebius, who preserves these passages of their letters, narrates the history, and tells us, "These same martyrs commended Irenæus, who was then a Presbyter in the diocese of Lyons, to the abovementioned Bishop of Rome."¹ And so St. Jerome writes: "Irenæus, Presbyter to Pothinus, the bishop who then ruled the Church of Lyons in Gaul, was sent as legate by the martyrs of that place to Rome, concerning certain ecclesiastical questions, and exhibited to Eleutherius, the bishop, honourable letters concerning himself. Afterwards, when Pothinus, nearly at the age of ninety, was crowned with martyrdom for Christ, he was advanced to his place."²

In the very ancient writings called the Acts of St. Ignatius we read that he, "disbarking from the ship with great joy, hastened to see St. Polycarp, the bishop, who had been a fellow-hearer (of St. John) with himself." And a little after: "The cities and churches of Asia honoured the saint through their bishops, priests, and deacons."³ Also in the Acts of St. Polycarp, who, as Irenæus, his disciple, says, was ordained Bishop of Smyrna by the Apostles, he is called "Polycarp, the martyr in our times, much to be admired, the Apostolic and

¹ Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. v. 4.

² S. Hieron. Catalog. Script. Eccl. tom. iv. 113. ed. Ben.

³ Martyrium S. Ignat. s. 3. Coteler. Patr. Apost. tom. ii. 159.

Prophetic Doctor, and Bishop of the Catholic Church in Smyrna."¹

We have come now to the first century and to the times of the Apostles, in which lived those writers who by pre-eminence are called the Apostolic Fathers, as having conversed with the Apostles themselves.

St. Hermas evidently refers to the threefold orders where he speaks of "the Apostles, and *bishops*, and *doctors*, and *ministers*, who through the mercy of God have come in and *governed*, and *taught*, and *ministered* holily and modestly to the elect of God."²

St. Clement, also, writing to the Corinthians, draws a parallel between the Jewish and Christian hierarchy, and adds: "To the high priest are given his peculiar functions; and to the priests their own place is appointed; and on the Levites their proper ministry is imposed: the layman is obliged by the rules of the laity. Let each of you, brethren, in his own order, give God thanks with a good conscience, not transgressing the defined rule of his ministry."³ As a comment on this passage may be quoted the words of Jerome: "And that we may know the apostolical traditions to be taken from the Old Testament, what Aaron, and his sons, and the Levites were in the temple, that bishops, priests, and deacons have claim to be in the Church."⁴

¹ Martyrium S. Polycarpi, s. 16. *ibid.* p. 201.

² S. Hermæ Pastor. Vis. iii. 5.

³ S. Clem. 1 Ep. ad Cor. 40. comp. 42.

⁴ Ad Evangelium, tom. iv. 803.

There remains now only St. Ignatius, from whom, in the second chapter, we have already quoted enough. The following passage or two will suffice to close up this series. In his epistle to the Magnesians, after commending Damas, the bishop, Bassa and Apollonius, presbyters, and Sotion, a deacon, he goes on to say, "The bishop sits the first in order, as in the place of God, and the presbyters as the synod of Apostles, and the deacons, to me most dear, to whom is intrusted the ministry of Jesus Christ."¹ And to the Smyrneans, "Let all give heed to the bishop as Jesus Christ to the Father, and to the Presbytery, as to the Apostles; and reverence the deacons as the commandment of God."² And "there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup for the union of His blood, one altar, as one bishop, with the presbyters and deacons, my fellow servants."³

Although the testimonies here adduced are from the writings of uninspired men, there are yet two points worthy of much regard. The first is their absolute agreement; one and all describing, by three several and distinct names, the three several and distinct orders of bishop, priest, and deacon, as the threefold offices of the one apostolical ministry. The next, that the series of accordant witnesses has been traced up to the very lifetime of the Apostles of Christ. We may therefore conclude that from the latter part of the apostolic age both the names and offices were distinct and appropriate.

¹ Ad Magnes. 6.² Ad Smyrn. 8.³ Ad Philad. 4.

*In page 109
The antique
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why is it reasonable to look to uninspired writers as
the inspired ones for the solution of difficulties
which have arisen since both?*

2. § We will now go on to ascertain whether the same distinction is to be found in the documents of the inspired writers.

To make the present inquiry as clear and definite as possible, I will here state beforehand the conclusion in which it will terminate, *i. e.* that there is abundant evidence to show that if in the apostolic writings the *names* be interchanged among the three orders, yet the *offices* are never confounded.

The only point of difference, therefore, between the apostolic and post-apostolic age would seem to be, that the names had then become technical and restricted by second intention to the several offices.

(1. §) But before I bring any passages from the New Testament to show the possible confusion of these names, I must beg the reader's most careful attention to the following passage from the works of a writer, of whom it has been truly said, that even his lightest fragments are as the filings of gold. "It does not yet appear that the names bishop and presbyter in the apostolic writings are synonymous, where the offices of the Church are spoken of. Certainly, the arguments which have been hitherto adduced do not necessarily compel us to believe it; and it is more probable that such a common use of these words in the apostolic writings is not to be admitted. Because, in the first place, if we examine the origin of this interpretation, we shall find the first who brought it forward to confirm his opinion was Acrius the heretic, whose opinion was no sooner published than it was exploded by St.

Epiphanius. Secondly, those Catholics who afterwards embraced the same interpretation for another purpose, whether you take the ancients or the moderns, have never been able to agree in explaining it. If all the ways which can be contrived or fancied to explain this community of the two names should be exhibited, you will hardly find two which nobody has embraced, certainly not one in which two, or perhaps three have agreed, excepting those who professedly and wholly transcribe from others. Whosoever conceives the idea of the community of these two names must necessarily suppose that there existed in the Churches, first founded by the care and authority of the Apostles, either one only order, or two; and, indeed, they who contend for this community of names are divided into various opinions concerning the number of orders existing at that time. All acknowledge that, a short time after the books of the New Testament were written, two orders or grades, distinct both in office and dignity, obtained, whether by right or wrong, in the Church; to the superior of which the name of bishop, to the inferior of presbyter, was attached. They who think that only one of these existed while the books of the New Testament were being written, and that the other was afterwards added, acknowledge either the inferior order, above which the superior was afterwards placed, or the superior, to which the inferior was afterwards supplied. Hence arise two ways of explaining the community of the names—one, that the names of bishop and

presbyter were indiscriminately given to the priests of one order, who were called priests of the inferior order, or presbyters, after the superior order was introduced and placed over them; which opinion, they say, is that of St. Jerome, and I do not contest it: the other, that the same names were indiscriminately given to the priests of one order, who were called priests of the superior order or bishops, after the inferior order was introduced and placed under them; which opinion Hammond, than whom no one has handled the subject more accurately, defends as the most likely. They who do not doubt that in the Apostles' times, and by their institution, there were two orders distinct both in office and dignity, are divided into more opinions concerning the community of the names. Of which opinions the first was, that at that time either name was common to either order; so that they who were advanced to the superior order were called sometimes bishops and sometimes presbyters; and in like manner they that were ordained to the inferior grade were named sometimes presbyters and sometimes bishops, which was the opinion of Chrysostom and his followers. But the second opinion was, that the name bishop and presbyter was given indifferently and indiscriminately to the priests of the inferior order; but neither of them to those of the first order, or the bishops, because at that time the priests of the first order were called Apostles, which was the opinion of Theodoret. Besides these, two other conjectures may be formed,

i. e. that the priests of the superior order were sometimes called bishops and sometimes presbyters, but those of the inferior—presbyters only, which Hammond admits as likely; or that the priests of the inferior order were sometimes called presbyters and sometimes bishops, but those of the superior—bishops only, which no one has embraced. Since there is so great dissension among all who think they have discovered the community of these names in Scripture, and their various opinions, which are almost as many as there are men, can in no way be reconciled, it is rendered still more probable that such a community of names is not indeed to be found in Scripture at all.”¹

We may now shortly state the case as it relates to the usage of these names in Holy Scripture; always remembering that no argument will be drawn from it. In the New Testament the words *ἐπίσκοπος*, *πρεσβύτερος*, and *διάκονος*, bishop, priest, and deacon, or overseer, elder, and minister, with their cognates, *ἐπισκοπή*, *πρεσβυτέριον*, and *διακονία*, episcopate, presbytery, diaconate, or oversight, eldership, and ministry, are used in various ways, which may, however, be reduced to two—general and ecclesiastical.

Of the general use the following will be sufficient examples.

Our Lord says of Jerusalem that she knew not the time of her visitation: *τὸν καιρὸν τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς*.²

¹ Bishop Pearson's *Vindiciæ Ignatianæ*, cap. xiii. Cotelier Pat. Apost. ii. 427.

² St. Luke xix. 44. See also 1 St. Pet. ii. 12.

We read in St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews that, "through faith, the elders (οἱ πρεσβύτεροι)¹ obtained a good report." In the parable of the wedding garment the king commands the servants (τοῖς διακόνοις²) to bind the intruder and cast him forth. Our Lord says to His disciples, "Who-soever will be great among you, let him be your minister" (διάκονος).³ And of Martha we read that she "was cumbered about much serving" (διακονίαν).⁴

This general sense of the words by restriction became ecclesiastical.

And first of the Jewish Church. The words ἐπίσκοπος and ἐπισκοπή do not occur in the New Testament as applied to the Church of the Jews. But the word bishopric (ἐπισκοπή) is quoted from the 109th Psalm by St. Peter—"And his bishopric let another take" (καὶ τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν αὐτοῦ λάβοι ἕτερος).⁵ In the Septuagint the word ἐπίσκοπος is of frequent occurrence. In Numbers xxxi. 14, the captain of the host is ἐπίσκοπος τῆς δυνάμεως. In 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12, 17, the chief among the workmen. In Neh. xi. 9, 14, the ruler or prince of the city; and ch. v. 10, the chief of the priests: in verse 15 the chief of the Levites is called ἐπίσκοπος. Eleazar the son of Aaron (who in Numbers iii. 32 is called ἀρχόντων τῶν Λευϊτῶν ἄρχων, the ruler of the rulers of the Levites) in Numbers iv. 16 is called ἐπίσκοπος

¹ Heb. xi. 2.

² St. Matth. xxii. 13.

³ Ibid. xx. 26.

⁴ St. Luke x. 40.

⁵ Ps. cix. 8. For what follows, see Hammond's note on Acts i. 20.

'Ελεάζαρ.¹ In 2 Kings xi. 18, he that was set over the house of the Lord is called ἐπίσκοπος ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον κυρίου. In all these several uses the idea of precedence and ruling power is expressed.

In a multitude of places throughout the New Testament the word "elder" or "presbyter" signifies a member of the sanhedrim or council of the Jews, and πρεσβυτέριον, the council itself. In this usage all nations have alike concurred, as the γέροντες and γερουσία in the Greek states, and "Senatus" among the Latins. In this sense we read of "the tradition of the elders,"² the "elders and chief priests,"³ the "council of the people" (πρεσβυτέριον τοῦ λαοῦ),⁴ the "estate of the elders."⁵ In all which passages it is plain that the words signify a collective, deliberative, and ruling body, subject to the chief priests.⁶

The words "deacon" and "diaconate" nowhere occur in the New Testament as applied to the Jewish Church.

I now come to the use of these words as applied to the Church of Christ.

¹ Isai. lx. 17, LXX. καὶ δώσω τοὺς ἄρχοντάς σου ἐν εἰρήνῃ, καὶ τοὺς ἐπισκόπους σου ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ. Quoted thus by St. Clement, 1 Ep. ad Cor. c. 42:—καὶ τοῦτο (i. e., the institution of bishops and deacons by the Apostles) οὐ καινῶς, ἐκ γὰρ δὴ πολλῶν χρόνων ἐγγράπτο περὶ ἐπισκόπων καὶ διακόνων. Οὕτως γάρ που λέγει ἡ γραφή· "καταστήσω τοὺς ἐπισκόπους αὐτῶν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, καὶ τοὺς διακόνους αὐτῶν ἐν πίστει."

² St. Matth. xv. 2.

³ St. Mark viii. 31.

⁴ St. Luke xxii. 66.

⁵ Acts xxii. 5.

⁶ Hammond's Paraphr. on New Test., note on Acts xi. 26.

We have already seen that the word "bishopric" (ἐπισκοπή) is applied by St. Luke to the Apostolate of Judas. We find it again used by St. Paul in writing to Timothy, as expressing the episcopate or oversight (whether singly or conjointly must be determined by other evidence) of a particular church.¹ St. Paul charges the presbyters or elders (τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας)² who met him at Miletus, to take heed to the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them "overseers" or "bishops" (ἐπισκόπους).³ He also salutes the Philippian Church "with the bishops and deacons."⁴ He tells Titus, a "bishop" should be blameless.⁵ Here we find the Milesian presbyters addressed as "bishops," and a salutation omitting the presbytery sent to only two orders in the Church at Philippi. Also, in the Epistle to Timothy, an immediate transition is made from the office of a bishop to that of a deacon.⁶

So again we find with the word "presbyter" or "elder." We read of "the apostles and elders,"⁷ "the elders and brethren,"⁸ "the elders of the church;"⁹ in all which places "presbyters" will equally stand. St. James speaks of "the elders of the church"¹⁰ for the ministry generally. St. Peter exhorts the elders or presbyters to feed the flock of God.¹¹

¹ 1 Tim. iii. 1.² Acts xx. 17.³ Ibid. 28.⁴ Phil. i. 1.⁵ Tit. i. 7.⁶ 1 Tim. iii. 1, 8.⁷ Acts xv. 2, 4, 6.⁸ Ibid. 23.⁹ xx. 17.¹⁰ St. Jam. v. 14.¹¹ 1 St. Pet. v. 1, 2.

St. Paul charges Timothy to cherish the gift that was given to him by "the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."¹

Now in all this there is not so much as a word of bishop or bishopric.

And to make this apparent ambiguity greater, we find the Apostles nowhere call themselves bishops. We find St. Peter and St. John calling themselves presbyters.² St. Paul calls Tychicus a deacon,³ and Timothy a deacon,⁴ and himself a deacon,⁵ and all the Apostles deacons twice over;⁶ and, as if to banish from our minds the whole question of names, he calls Apollos an apostle,⁷ and Epaphroditus an apostle.⁸

Certainly, if the interchange of names be at all a refutative argument, then there did not exist, as a distinct office, Deacon, Presbyter, Bishop, or Apostle. They who contend that the names are thus common and indiscriminate must abide the full issue of their principle. To say that a word is used here in a wider, and there in a restricted sense—that in one place the Apostle would magnify the office of his fellow-workers—and in another depress his own dignity, is but to admit a principle of sound criticism, by which, if applied at all, they also must consistently and fairly abide. The issue would not be doubtful, though very adverse to their pur-

Tim. iv. 14. ² 1 St. Peter v. 1; 2 St. John 1; 3 St. John 1.

³ Eph. vi. 21. ⁴ 1 Tim. iv. 6. ⁵ Eph. iii. 7.

⁶ 1 Cor. iv. 1; 2 Cor. iii. 6.

⁷ 1 Cor. iv. 6, conf. 9. - Vid. Suic. Thesaur. in voc. ἀπόστολος.

⁸ Philip. ii. 25 : *στρατιώτην μου ἡμῶν δὲ ἀπόστολον.*

pose in adopting it. Now it is not to be denied that the seeming laxity with which these names are used in the apostolic writings presents at first sight no small difficulty. But it is equally certain that the way to make the difficulty a thousand-fold greater is to attempt a verbal proof from the several *names* without first investigating the *facts* of the case. We should not only be committing ourselves to a mistaken view of the matter from which the proof is to be derived, but also to a false principle on which the investigation is to be conducted. "To contend about the names of bishops or presbyters is nothing more than walking upon air; and so to propound the dispute that there never can be an end of disputing:"¹ the real question being whether the Apostles, before they departed this life, committed the ultimate power of ruling the Church, and ordaining others, to any one person in each church, or to many, that is, according to the modern formula, whether to a bishop, or to a body of presbyters?² When we have come to a conclusion on this point, we shall find that the names in the apostolic writings will for the most part fall into their own places. But, after all, whether we succeed or no in adjusting the use of these several *titles*, the facts of history will prove that the *offices* were distinct; and on this alone we rest.

¹ "De nominibus enim Episcoporum et Presbyterorum contendere nihil aliud est quam ἀποβαρεῖν, et disputationem ita instituere, ut nullus sit disputandi finis." Bishop Beveridge, in Cod. Can., &c., lib. ii. c. xi. 13.

² Ibid.

We must remember, then, that the point is not to be decided by quoting the first acts of the apostles, immediately after our Lord's ascension, when they were on the threshold of their ministry.¹ He that searches for dogmatic proofs (for the co-optation of Matthias is a practical one) of the apostolical succession at the time the Apostles were only themselves succeeding to the sole apostolate² of our Lord, must have a mind strangely exacting, or eccentric in its reasoning process: or he that looks to find from the beginning of the Gospel an entire hierarchy, with all its supplements and complements of order and office, must have a mind as strangely unskilled in the analogies of God's works. The notion that the Church was perfected in all its organic parts, *uno apostolorum afflatu*, by the first breath of St. Peter and the Apostles, has no foundation in the testimony either of inspired or uninspired history. On the contrary, not only the analogy of all God's inanimate and animate works, but also his earlier dispensations, would lead us beforehand to look for what in Holy Scripture we find.³ We may take therefore the beginning of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles and the beginning of the Book of the Revelation of St. John for the two extreme points of the Apostolic ministry as recorded by inspired men. Between these two extremes we may trace the growth and development of the Church; and how, according

¹ Bishop Beveridge, in Cod. Can., &c., lib. ii. c. xi. 13.

² "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."—St. John xx. 21.

³ S. Epiph. adv. Hæc. lib. iii. tom. i. v.

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to its necessities, some organic provision to maintain its health and energy was supplied. The point to be ascertained is not so much what the Apostles did when they began to found the Church, as how they left it when they had finished the work which their Lord had given them to do.

And first we have the witness of Scripture that the number of twelve, which had been determined by the Lord Himself for the fellowship of His Apostles, was carefully and designedly kept up, by the co-optation of Matthias into the place of Judas.

The twelve, with the rest of the Disciples, in all one hundred and twenty, were the whole Church of Christ.

The seventy disciples, who, as the Evangelists record, had been chosen and sent forth by our Lord, do not appear again as a distinct body in the apostolic writings: but that they continued in the fellowship of the Apostles, and that their original commission, which, so far as we read, had never been revoked by our Lord, was not rescinded by His Apostles, no one can doubt.

We then read of the selection and ordination of seven men to a subordinate and secular office. The seven deacons, as we are wont to call them, were set apart to a function which is placed in diametrical contradistinction from the spiritual office of the Apostles. They were ordained to serve tables, that the Apostles, being exempt from that secular burden, might without distraction give themselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. Thus far the Diaconate

was a simply secular office ; and yet we find it imposed upon men, of whom two, Stephen and Philip, immediately appear preaching and baptizing in the name of Christ. Either, then, as some think, they were already of the number of the seventy whom our Lord had commissioned to preach ; or the laying on of the hands of the Apostles did confer a restricted spiritual office, to which the secular function, though it was the end for which they were required, was but incidental. I say a restricted office, because, after that Philip had preached and baptized at Samaria, the Apostles Peter and John were sent thither to lay hands upon those that had received Philip's baptism.¹ This is a fact of much importance, inasmuch as it proves, beyond controversy, that the Apostles, out of the plenitude of their ghostly authority, communicated a portion of their functions, and constituted an inferior order with a restricted power, which was a development or offshoot of their own commission. The date of this transaction was about the year A.D. 37, and before the Apostles left Jerusalem.² We then read of the conversion of St. Paul, of his going up to Jerusalem, of the vision of St. Peter at Joppa, of the admission of the Gentiles in the person of Cornelius : then of St. Peter's going to justify himself to the Apostles and brethren in Jerusalem : then of the spread of the Gospel in Phoenice, Cyprus, and Antioch, to which place Barnabas was sent from Jerusalem about the year A.D. 43, that is six years, or more, after the ordina-

¹ Acts viii. 14, 17.² Ibid. viii. 1.

tion of the Deacons. Up to this time we have heard of none but the Apostles and Deacons, and now for the first time we read of Presbyters. The Christians of Antioch made a gathering for the relief of the brethren in Judæa, against the famine which Agabus foretold, and sent "it to the elders (*πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους*) by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."

Before I make any remark upon this newly emergent feature in the primitive system, I must first observe that hitherto, that is, for the space of at least ten years, we know from Scripture of no orders in the Church at Jerusalem but Apostles and Deacons. It would seem that this was the polity which was first required, and therefore first developed, in the beginnings of a Church; and this seems to hold good also at Philippi: by which supposition we might not improbably solve the omission of Presbyters in St. Paul's salutation of that Church; and likewise the apparent omission in his instructions to Timothy.¹

¹ So St. Clement of Rome: "Christ was sent from God, and the Apostles from Christ, and they went forth preaching the Gospel . . . as they preached in the countries and cities they constituted their first fruits, after approving them by the Spirit, as Bishops and Deacons of those that should believe." Ep. i. ad Cor. 42. As also St Cyprian: "Deacons ought to remember that the Apostles, that is, Bishops and Rulers, the Lord himself chose out; but that the Deacons, after the ascension of the Lord into heaven, the Apostles instituted, to be ministers of their Episcopate, and of the Church." Ep. ad Rogat. lxxv. ed. Ben. To the same effect St. Epiphanius says, that the Apostles developed the orders gradually, according to the state of each several Church: in some places ordaining Presbyters and Deacons, reserving the

I say, the apparent omission in the Epistle to Timothy; for Presbyters are not really omitted, but twice most distinctly and expressly spoken of.¹ Moreover, if real omissions were conclusive proofs, there would seem to have been no Deacons in the churches of Crete; for, in the Epistle to Titus, St. Paul describes only the character and qualifications necessary for Presbyters or Bishops.² But this would prove too much. After all, nothing can be proved from omissions, but the gradual development of the several Churches, which the facts of history also confirm.

We have next to consider the origin and the functions of Presbyters, as they now for the first time appear in the Church of Jerusalem.

It is remarkable that we have no record of the institution of these Presbyters. We find them existing as a body in the Church of Jerusalem, but there is not a trace of their first rise. It would be well if they who rest so much on names would observe this fact.

Episcopate; in others, a Bishop and Deacons, reserving the Presbyterate: for instance, he says, in explaining the use of the names in St. Paul's Epistles, "Where there was none fit or worthy to be a Bishop, the place remained void without any: when need required, and there were those that were fit for it, Bishops were constituted; but while there was no great multitude of Christians, there were found none among them to be constituted Presbyter, and they contented themselves with a Bishop alone: yet without a Deacon it was impossible for a Bishop to be, and therefore the Apostle took care that the Bishop should have his Deacons to minister to him." S. Epiphan. lib. iii. t. 1. See also s. v.

¹ 1 Tim. v. 17, 18, 19.

² Tit. i. 7.

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That the office of Presbyter was not the same as that of the Deacons is confessed on all hands.

That it was not the same as that of the Apostles is equally plain, for we find the Apostles and Presbyters carefully distinguished, as in the following passages. In the discussions which arose about circumcision, Paul and Barnabas went up "to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and Presbyters;"¹ "they were received of the Church and of the Apostles and Presbyters."² "The Apostles and Presbyters came together for to consider of this matter."³ "Then pleased it the Apostles and Presbyters and the whole Church to send chosen men."⁴ "And they wrote letters by them after this manner: The Apostles, Presbyters, and Brethren send greeting."⁵ "And as they went through the cities they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the Apostles and Presbyters which were at Jerusalem."⁶ Now it is here to be observed that, be the Presbyters what they may, they are distinguished from the Apostles and named after them in every case. I know of no instance in which this precedence is not observed. It must also be remarked that at this same time one of the Apostles stood in a very conspicuous and peculiar relation to the Presbyters at Jerusalem. It is true that Scripture does not exactly define it; but there are sufficient indications of a personal and peculiar authority vested in St. James. When St. Peter was delivered out of prison

¹ Acts xv. 2.

² Ibid. 4.

³ Ibid. 6.

⁴ Ibid. 22.

⁵ Ibid. 23.

⁶ Ibid. xvi. 4.

by the angel, his first care, as soon as he entered the house of Mary, was to send and make known his safety "to James and to the brethren."¹ At St. Paul's first visit to Jerusalem after his conversion we find James, Cephas, and John mentioned, James being named first.² When, at the council at Jerusalem, St. Peter had stated his opinion on the question of circumcision, it was James that summed up the discussion, and gave the definitive sentence on which the council proceeded to act.³ And again at St. Paul's last visit to Jerusalem, we read he "went in unto James, and all the Presbyters were present."⁴ And he saluted them and gave an account of his ministry among the Gentiles. No one can doubt that this account of St. Paul's ministry was rendered to the Church of Jerusalem, then and there duly assembled, and James is named at the head of it. As I have strictly confined myself to Holy Scripture in this part of the present chapter, I forbear to introduce into the text collateral proofs of the historical fact that St. James was Bishop of that Church.⁵

¹ Acts xii. 17.

² Gal. i. 19, and ii. 9.

³ Acts xv. 13.

⁴ Ibid. xxi. 18.

⁵ "At Acts xii. 17, there is such a distinct and special mention of James, the brother of our Lord, as justifies us in supposing that he already possessed a specific rank in the Church of Jerusalem; and yet it is the first of the kind, and it comes in, as we see, at the Passover of U.C. 796 (A.D. 42), after the conversion of Cornelius. It is an unquestionable fact that this James was Bishop of Jerusalem. And if he had been appointed subsequently to the conversion of Cornelius, U.C. 794, it would do much to confirm the tradition above alluded to, that for twelve years the Apostles were not to leave Jerusalem; and, consequently, that at the end of twelve they were. While they were all in Jerusalem, and all

These indications of Scripture are enough for my present purpose, which is to show that in every case the Apostles are referred to as distinct from and superior to Presbyters, and that St. James had a visible precedence in rank and office. There is only one more mention of Presbyters in the Book of Acts. In the fourteenth chapter we read of St. Paul's first preaching among the Gentiles of Asia. This was about the year A.D. 44. In the 23d verse we read that Paul and Barnabas "ordained them Presbyters in every city."¹ Here we have the first and only record of such an ordination in the Book of Acts. Now, of whatsoever rank and power these were, it is manifest they stood in the same relation to the Apostles Paul and Barnabas that the Presbyters of Jerusalem stood in to the

actively engaged on the spot, it is reasonable to presume they would all be at the head of the Church alike; and so, from Acts vi. 2; viii. 1—14; ix. 27, 32; xi. 1, before this point of time in U.C. 796, they are manifestly seen to be. But when they were beginning to prepare for the business of preaching the Gospel on a more enlarged scale than before, and in other parts of the world besides Judæa, the necessity of appointing some one to reside with, and to preside over the mother Church permanently, would be evident even to ordinary wisdom and prudence: in which case (if the choice were not dictated by the Holy Ghost himself), none was so likely to be selected for the government of a Church, which consisted exclusively of the brethren of Christ according to the flesh, as James, the brother of Christ according to the flesh." *Greswell's Harmony of the Gospels*, vol. ii. 58. The historical proofs are given in full by Bishop Taylor in his *Episcopacy Asserted*, &c., sect. xiii.; by Cave, in the history of St. James the Less, contained in his *Lives of the Apostles*; and by Hammond, *Letter of Resolution to Six Queries*, Works, vol. i. p. 511.

¹ Acts xiv. 23.

rest of the Apostles, and to James the Just. They were of the same order with those of whom we read that they were convened by St. Paul to Miletus, *i. e.* "the Presbyters of the Church"¹ of Ephesus. It seems highly probable, according to the view already advanced on the authority of St. Epiphanius,² that in these Churches there were none mature enough in the faith for the charge of the Episcopate. They were necessarily new converts, or "novices;" and for that reason, by the judgment of St. Paul, unfit for the office of a Bishop.³ The Apostles therefore ordained Presbyters, or teachers, reserving to themselves the government of the Churches, which, as we expressly read in the Book of Acts, St. Paul exercised in his apostolic journeys throughout Asia.⁴ Of Presbyters we do not once read in any of the Apostolic epistles until we come to the First to Timothy. In the absence of all other lights from Holy Scripture, it is reasonable to conclude that these Presbyters were an order constituted by the Apostles, when the multitude of Christians increased, to aid them in the spiritual functions of the Apostolate, as the Deacons were first constituted, when "the number of the disciples was multiplied,"⁵ to relieve them of the secular office of distributing the alms of the Church. At first they needed assistants only in the lower, afterwards also in the higher functions: and what was true in any church, as at Jerusalem, by reason of the multitude

¹ Acts xx. 17. ² See p. 122, and note. ³ 1 Tim. iii. 6.

⁴ Acts xv. 36.

⁵ Acts vi. 1.

of Christians, was true also in other churches by reason of the absence of the Apostles. In the journeys of St. Paul he must needs leave each several church as he founded it, and pass on to other cities. Therefore he left men charged with spiritual functions, reserving to himself the oversight.

But still there remains this difficulty: St. Paul calls the Presbyters who met him at Miletus "Bishops." And in his Epistle to Titus it would seem as if the two names were indiscriminately used, and the two apparent offices were one and the same.¹ Let us make the most of the difficulty. The Bishops and Deacons at Philippi might then be only Presbyters and Deacons, and St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy would seem to show that these were the only two orders existing at that time. This, I believe, is the full force of which the objection is capable. Now let it be observed that the controversy turns upon these two passages. Let them, for a moment, be supposed not to exist, and the others may be explained on the principle stated by St. Epiphanius. We are therefore testing the expressions, not of many passages, but of two only: no others have the same *verbal* ambiguity; and in these two, it would certainly seem that St. Paul calls the same persons at one time Presbyters, and at another Bishops.

It may not be amiss to state that it has been thought, by some well versed in the records of the Church, that both the Presbyters of Jerusalem

¹ Titus i. 5—7.

before spoken of, and the Presbyters of Ephesus, were truly Bishops gathered from the neighbouring churches.¹ This view is rendered not unlikely by the passage of Irenæus already quoted, in which he says "the Bishops and Presbyters from Ephesus, and the other neighbouring cities, were convened" by St. Paul.

It may also be supposed that, among them, there might be Bishops; or it may be conceived that St. Paul calls them Bishops, because in his absence they had the oversight of the flock which he had gathered. They were his representatives.

We may now examine how they meet the difficulty who, while they contend for the distinction of *orders*, admit the community of names; and first we may cite St. Chrysostom, who on the salutation of the Philippian Church² has this comment:—"What is this? Were there many Bishops of one city? By no means. But he thus calls the Presbyters. For up to that time they partook of the names in common, and the Bishop himself was called a Deacon."³ Again: "Of old the Presbyters were called 'Bishops,' and the Bishops 'Presbyters' and 'Deacons' of Christ; whence many Bishops even now write to their 'fellow-presbyter' and 'fellow-deacon.' But afterwards the proper name was distributed to each, and the one called 'Bishop,' the other 'Presbyter.'" And on the First Epistle to

¹ Döllinger's Hist. of the Church, vol. 1. p. 228, 229.

² Philip. i. 1.

³ S. Chrysost. in loc.

Timothy he says, "Discoursing of Bishops, and sketching their character, and saying what things a Bishop should have, and from what he should abstain, and having omitted the order of Presbyters, he (St. Paul) passes on at a leap to the Deacons. Why? Because the difference between them and Bishops is not much, forasmuch as they also are possessed of the authority to teach, and to rule the Church. And what he said of Bishops applies also to them; for they exceed them by the power of ordaining only, and in this alone they have more authority than the Presbyters."¹

Theodoret, whose commentary represents that of St. Chrysostom, says on the same passage to the Philippians: "He called the blessed Epaphroditus their 'Apostle' in this same epistle, thereby plainly showing that he had the functions of the Episcopate committed to him as he had the title of Apostle." So in verse 25 of chapter ii.: "He called him their Apostle, as having the charge of them committed to him; so that it is evident that they, who in the opening of the Epistle were called Bishops, ministered under him, that is, discharging the office of Presbyter." And this he explains more fully in his commentary on 1 Tim. iii.: "They were wont of old to call the same persons Presbyters and Bishops. But those that are now called Bishops they named Apostles. But in process of time they gave up the name of the Apostleship to those that

¹ In 1 Epist. ad Tim. cap. iii. Hom. xi.

were in a strict sense Apostles; and applied the title of the Episcopate to those that were of old called Apostles. Thus Epaphroditus was Apostle of the Philippians; thus Titus was Apostle of the Cretans, and Timothy of the Asiatics. Thus the Apostles and Presbyters who were at Jerusalem wrote to those in Antioch." So the author of the Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul, which has been ascribed to St. Jerome,¹ on the third chapter of the First Epistle to Timothy, says, "It is a question why he makes no mention of Presbyters, but comprehends them in the name of Bishops. Because the second order is all but one," *i. e.* with the first. Now it must be remarked that both these writers, at one and the same time, contend for the community of the *names* and the distinction of the *orders* even in the Apostles' times: so that, if the view of Bishop Pearson, founded on the testimony of St. Epiphanius and St. Irenæus, be at all unsettled by the weight of their testimony, our conviction of the main point for which we are seeking, namely, the distinctness of the Episcopate, must be in the same measure confirmed.

We will, however, once more take up the passage in the Book of Acts. The question is—Are the same persons called by St. Paul both Presbyters and Bishops? It is evident, from all that is gone before, that we cannot arrive at any demonstrative proof. We must after all rest contented with a probable conclusion. It seems, then, not an untenable

¹ Probably by Pelagius. Opp. S. Hieron. tom. v. 1089. ed. Ben.

opinion that the same persons are not called by St. Paul "Presbyters" and "Bishops." The reasons of that opinion are: first, that in the whole Book of Acts there is no other passage which renders such an usage of words probable; and, secondly, that the use of the words "Bishop" and "Deacon," in the Epistle to Timothy, so appears to square with the state of the Church of Jerusalem under the two orders of Apostles and Deacons as to render the restricted and appropriate use of the names more probable than their indiscriminate application;¹ thirdly, Theophylact, commenting on the place, says, "It is to be observed that those whom he before calls Presbyters he here calls Bishops, that is, because Presbyters necessarily oversee the reasonable flock of the Church, lest any should be weak in faith, lest any hunger or thirst, or stand in need of reproof and restoration; or he thus *calls Bishops those who were really Bishops.*"²

And this brings us again upon the words of St. Irenæus, which I will now give with the comment of Bishop Pearson: "Irenæus did not think that, the same men in that place were called 'Bishops' and 'Presbyters,' or that they belonged to the church of one city. For as he says, lib. iii. c. 14, 'The Bishops and Presbyters who came from Ephesus, and the rest of the neighbouring cities, being called together at Miletus.' According to the opinion of Irenæus, St. Paul called to him both Bishops and Presbyters: he

¹ See page 122, and the note.

² Theophylact. in loc.

did not call them together therefore from one city alone, nor did he call only the rulers of the second order, nor style them 'Bishops.' This place in the Book of Acts Chrysostom, Jerome, and others, in the fourth and following centuries, quote, and lay as the foundation of their opinions, chiefly disputing as about one city alone. Irenæus, a writer of the second century, and much nigher to the Apostles and Apostolic men, never so much as dreamed of such a thing."¹ To this we may add that Irenæus was born probably at Smyrna, and about the year A.D. 97-8,² that is, within thirty or five-and-thirty years after the visit of St. Paul to Miletus; that he was the disciple of Polycarp, who was Bishop of Smyrna and a companion of the Apostles; and that Smyrna was a suffragan church under the metropolitan jurisdiction of Ephesus.³ All these things are so many probabilities in favour of St. Irenæus's thorough knowledge of the then condition of the Asiatic churches; and therefore give his words a weight that no other uninspired Christian writer seems to possess on the point in question. It would follow, then, that the Presbyters from Ephesus were the Presbytery of that church over which, if not already at that time, at least within a time indefinitely short, as we shall see, Timothy is

¹ Vind. Ignat. c. xiii. See also Bishop Andrewes' *Concio ad Clerum* on Acts xx. 28. *Opuscula*, p. 25. The difficulty, however, in Tit. i. 5—7 still remains.

² Cave's *Histor. Lit.* in voc. Irenæus.

³ Bingham, *Orig. Eccl.*, book ix. c. iii. ix.

proved by Holy Scripture to be bishop. At this convention he was probably present. The Bishops, in this view, came from the neighbouring cities. But be this as it may. If any one still prefer the opinion of St. Chrysostom, which has been adopted by Hooker and Hammond, it will equally accord with our main argument. We will therefore dismiss the names, and take up once more the question, whether the Apostles committed to many, or to one, the power of ruling and ordaining in the Church.

(2. §) That the ultimate form in which St. Paul left the polity of the churches founded by him was an Episcopate of one person, is, I conceive, put beyond doubt by Holy Scripture. The Epistles to Timothy and Titus were written in the years A.D. 64-66, that is, towards the end of his life, when for that reason he was providing for the continuance of the Church by succession, and thereby for leaving it after his death in the same form in which it had been settled during his life, when he exercised himself the oversight, or Apostolical Episcopate, of all churches of his planting; and by these two documents it is incontestably proved that Timothy was sole ruler in Ephesus, and Titus in Crete, as the delegates, representatives, and successors of St. Paul.

Now the First Epistle to Timothy was written either when St. Paul passed into Macedonia, leaving him at Ephesus, or shortly afterwards; and the mention of this event is to remind Timothy of his original appointment to that Church. It was written therefore either before or after the summoning

of the Presbyters from Ephesus to Miletus. Either way the proof will hold that, a little before, or a few years after that convention, Timothy was bishop over them, and the supreme government of the Church was committed to him alone. In fact he was to them what St. James was to the Presbyters at Jerusalem; and lest it should seem that this was a temporary commission, we have the second Epistle to Timothy, written, on one supposition, two, on another, many years after the first, and on any supposition at the very end of St. Paul's life, when he was "now ready to be offered, and the time" of his "departure was at hand."

I forbear, in the case of Timothy, as in that of St. James, to cite the abundant historical evidence which proves that he was in the strictest sense Bishop of Ephesus. We are arguing from Holy Scripture. It will not, however, be amiss to remember that the argument here offered is in exact accordance with history, and that any other is in diametrical opposition to the whole body of historical evidence.

We will now ascertain from the internal evidence of the Epistles, first, whence he derived his commission; and, next, with what powers he was invested over the Ephesian Presbyters.

As to his commission, we read it was from St. Paul himself: "I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus."¹ But the gift which he received, that is the grace which accompanied the Episcopate, was

¹ 1 Tim. i. 3.

given him by the "laying on of the hands of the Presbytery."¹ Here we seem to return into the original difficulty. Let us first see therefore how they whose authority is used for the community of names deal with this passage. St. Chrysostom's comment is, "He does not here speak of Presbyters, but of Bishops, for Presbyters did not ordain a Bishop." Theophylact repeats his words. Theodoret says, "He calls the office of teaching a gift (χάρισμα), and those that were deemed worthy of the apostolic grace the 'presbytery.'" Now it comes to this—either they were Bishops, or they were not. If they were Bishops in Acts xx. 28, they are so here, and the difficulty vanishes: if not in either place we must look for some other solution. And we need not to look far. In the first chapter of the second Epistle, St. Paul writes, "Stir up the gift that is in thee by the putting on of *my* hands."² What can then be the meaning of the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery? The Apostle declares himself to be the sole ordainer of Timothy. I say sole, because he was the sufficient authority; and as for the rest, it may be that Silas, Paul's fellow-worker, and St. Luke, the companion of his journeys, and, it may be also, gifted persons, as in the mission of St. Paul himself to the Gentiles,³ were joint partakers of the act. And this last supposition has a direct countenance from the words of St. Paul to Timothy where he says, "This charge I commit to thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies

¹ 1 Tim. iv. 14.² 2 Tim. i. 6.³ Acts xiii. 1.

*which went before on thee."*¹ And, after all, the Apostle himself declaring that his own hands ordained Timothy, why may we not also conceive that the Presbytery of the Church expressed their acceptance of their spiritual ruler by joining in the act?²

¹ 1 Tim. i. 18. Comp. the prophecy of Agabus on St. Paul. Acts xxi. 10, 11.

² If, on such a point as this, a conjecture is not of much weight, yet it can at least do no harm to cite certain remarkable facts which seem to look towards the supposition in the text. It is well known that Presbyters, who have neither singly nor collectively the power of ordaining Presbyters, are nevertheless permitted by the Catholic Church to express their consent or concurrence in the ordination of their brethren by laying their hands, with the Bishop, on the head of the candidate for the priesthood. It is certain that such a privilege has been permitted even in the consecration of Bishops. We find Pope Pelagius was consecrated by the imposition of the hands of two Bishops and one Presbyter, a priest of Ostia. (See Mason's *Vindication of the Church of England*, &c., p. 41.) This is on the authority of Anastasius, and admitted by Baronius and Binius. There is also an answer of St. Gregory the Great to St. Augustin, which is even more in point. St. Augustin, in the early part of his mission in Britain, when he desired to consecrate Mellitus and Justus, wrote to ask, "If the Bishops are so far apart one from another that they cannot conveniently assemble, whether may a Bishop be ordained without the presence of other Bishops?" Gregory answered—"In the Church of England, in which only thou art as yet a Bishop, thou canst not ordain at all but in the absence of other Bishops. For when do any Bishops come out of France to assist you in ordaining Bishops? We will therefore that you ordain Bishops; but so that they may not be far one from another, that there be no such necessity but that they may hereafter come together at the creation of others. And the other pastors, whose presence is highly useful, may readily assemble." Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, lib. i. xxvii. Here pastors evidently are distinguished from bishops. (See Mason, *Vind.*, pp. 92, 93.) We find in Morinus de *Prim. Ord. Exercit.* ii. c. iii. vi., the decree of election (preserved in the *Euchologium*) which

We will now go on to the powers with which Timothy was invested. And we may remark at the outset that, whatsoever share the Presbyters may have had in the imposition of hands, Timothy was intrusted with a sole and supreme power over them.

He was, first, charged to witness the true doctrine of Christ;¹ and to take heed that no man should teach any other;² next, he was empowered to exercise discipline over the flock; to rebuke, reprove, and exhort;³ and, if need be, to reject from the communion of the Church: again, he was intrusted with authority to take cognizance of the character and lives of Bishops,⁴ Presbyters,⁵ and Deacons.⁶ Of Presbyters it is especially said, "Let the elders (Presbyters) that rule well be counted worthy

was read out at the consecration of Bishops. He gives it as follows: "If the Patriarch be the consecrator, the decree runs, 'by the suffrage and approbation of the most sacred Metropolitans, Archbishops, and Bishops;' if a Metropolitan be consecrator, thus: 'by the suffrage and approbation of the Bishops most acceptable to God, and the reverend Presbyters.' When the Patriarch ordains, that is in a patriarchal province, Bishops, Archbishops, and Metropolitans only concur in the election; but when a Metropolitan, the Presbyters also." And in this we may find some precedent, such as it is, for the strange custom of the Romanists in England and Ireland, who, "during the greater part if not the whole of the last century," as Mr. Palmer says, "had Bishops consecrated by one Bishop and two Priests, which was done by authority of a bull, permitting, for the "increase of their conveniency," that, in lieu of witnesses, two secular priests should assist. See Palmer's Treatise, vol. ii. pp. 469, 470. Döllinger's Hist. of the Church, vol. ii. p. 27, note.

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 12, 13, 14; 2 Tim. i. 13; iii. 14-17.

² 1 Tim. i. 3; vi. 3, 4, 5.

³ 1 Tim. v. 20; 2 Tim. iv. 2.

⁴ 1 Tim. iii. 1.

⁵ 1 Tim. v. 17, 19.

⁶ 1 Tim. iii. 8, &c.

of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. Against an elder (Presbyter) receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses;"¹ and, lastly, Timothy was empowered to continue the succession of the Church by the laying on of hands,² that is, by ordination. The same office may be shown to be vested also in Titus for his Episcopate over the whole of Crete. Only one passage, as bearing directly upon the chief point at issue, need be cited. "For this cause," says St. Paul, "left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain Presbyters in every city."³ Now to this single point of ordination we may henceforward confine our inquiry; and in the first place it must be observed, that there is no one passage in the whole of the New Testament in which Presbyters are said to lay on hands, except that which has been already quoted above; and there St. Paul declares that he himself was the authority of the ordination—I mean in the case of Timothy; and in the second place it must be observed that, in the commissions given to Timothy and Titus, the power of ordination is intrusted to them alone. In this one point may be said to lie the *differentia* of the episcopal office.

We have already seen St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Theophylact arguing that the Presbytery here were Bishops, because they laid hands on

¹ See above, page 102.

² 1 Tim. v. 22; 2 Tim. ii. 2.

³ Titus i. 5.

Timothy ; and St. Chrysostom asserting that Bishops exceed Presbyters in the power of ordaining only.

We will now take the evidence of St. Jerome, an authority trite and acknowledged by all the impugnors of the Episcopate. In his well-known epistle to Evangelus (al. Evagrius), he contends for the community of names, and is supposed to contend for the identity of orders. The truth is, he wrote for the purpose of repressing the self-elation of the Roman Deacons, who, through their riches and influence in the Church, endeavoured to set themselves above the Presbyters.¹ He proves the great interval of dignity between a Deacon and a Presbyter by saying that a Presbyter is almost equal to a Bishop. This, one would have thought, should have sufficiently expressed St. Jerome's mind, and preserved his isolated words from misinterpretation. After giving his view of the origin of the episcopal order, he adds, "What does a Bishop do that a Presbyter cannot, *except ordination?*"² And this is the only point we are now

¹ "Audio quendam in tantam erupisse vecordiam, ut Diaconos Presbyteris, id est Episcopis, anteferet ;" and afterwards : "Si ex Diacono ordinatur Presbyter, noverit se lucris minorem, Sacerdotio esse majorem."

² It is remarkable that there are not more than two or three instances of apparent ordination by Presbyters bearing a sufficiently probable character to be cited by the adversaries of the sole episcopal power. Bishop Stillingfleet, in his *Irenicum*, a book written when he was about four-and-twenty years old, after showing that the power of ordination was by the laws of the Church restricted to Bishops, wishes to prove that nevertheless the ordination of Presbyters was not declared invalid. From the tract of sixteen

concerned with. Of his other opinions we shall speak hereafter.

hundred years he brings three cases, two in the fourth and one in the fifth century. Their value will readily appear.

The first is that of the Abbot Daniel, A.D. 390, who is supposed to have been made Deacon by Paphnutius, a Presbyter of the desert. This is on the authority of Cassian, whose words are, "So greatly did Paphnutius delight in his virtues, that he hastened to equal with himself in the honour of the priesthood a man whom he knew to be his peer in merit and the grace of life. For he could by no means endure that he should tarry longer in a lower ministry; and, desiring to provide for himself a worthy successor, *in his own lifetime*, he raised him by the honour of the priesthood."

In the first place, who does not see that the point of the last sentence lies in the word "superstes,"—that Daniel was made Presbyter with a view to the succession, while Paphnutius was yet alive?

In this there was a departure from the usual course. Plainly, therefore, it was not the habit of the superior of the monastery to ordain his successor. But in truth it is nowhere said that Paphnutius did ordain him, but "coæquare" and "provexit" may well consist with the known and notorious rule in the ordination of monks, namely, that the Superior should select and send them to the Bishop in whose jurisdiction the monastery was situated. By the rule of St. Benedict it is ordered, "If any Abbot should desire to have a Presbyter or Deacon ordained, let him choose from the number of his brethren one that is meet to discharge the priestly office." Reg. D. Bened. cap. 6. See Cassian. Coll. 4, 1, note 6.

As to the monasteries of the East, they were not exempt from the Diocesan Episcopate. "Coæquat" and "provexit" can in no way signify "ordain." So far as in him lay, Paphnutius equalled Daniel to himself, and preferred him, that is chose him to be made his equal, and preferred to the priesthood. Without other evidence, and against the otherwise acknowledged and universal practice of the Church, and of all monasteries, this not only proves really nothing, but is even no ground of probable reasoning. I may add Fleury's account of the case: "Daniel était principalement recommandable par son humilité. Paphnuce le fit ordonner diacre, le préférant à plusieurs autres plus âgés, et même ensuite il le fit élever au sacerdoce." Histoire Eccl., lib. xx. c. vii.

The second case is the consecration of Pope Pelagius, in which

The power of ordination, then, was first reserved in the hands of the Apostles, and afterwards committed to two bishops and one priest assisted. This case is simply irrelevant. The consecration would have been valid at the hands of one bishop. The utmost that can be deduced from it is, that the priest by imposition of hands expressed a subordinate concurrence in the act of a superior, which was valid without his participation. But I have considered this case already in the note to page 137.

The third and last case is the only one which presents any difficulty. St. Leo, writing to Rusticus Narbonensis, who had asked his judgment of some Presbyters who took upon them to ordain as Bishops, answers—"Those clergymen who were ordained by such as took upon them the office of Bishops in churches belonging to proper Bishops, if the ordination were performed by the consent of the Bishops, it may be looked on as valid, and those Presbyters remain in their office in the Church." "Otherwise the creation (ordination) is to be held null which has neither the foundation of a place (*i. e.* a cure or church), nor is confirmed by authority." So Stillingfleet words it. Now it will be best to give St. Leo's answer entire, and as it stands; "No reason allows that they should be regarded as Bishops who are neither elected by the clergy, nor desired by the people, nor consecrated by the provincial Bishops, with the approbation of the metropolitan. Wherefore, since a question often arises concerning an honour (*i. e.* ecclesiastical rank) which has been irregularly received, who doubts that what is not shown to be conferred on them may by no means be attributed to them? But if any clergy are ordained by these mock-bishops (*pseudo-episcopi*) in those churches which belong to their own bishops, and their ordination is made by the consent and judgment of the bishops (*Præsidentium*), it may be held as valid, so that they may continue in the churches. Otherwise the ordination (*creatio*) is null, being grounded in no place (*i. e.* a cure or church), and confirmed by no authority." Now from this it would seem rather that the "*pseudo-episcopi*" were not simple Presbyters, but men who had obtained some irregular episcopal consecration. For which reason St. Leo recites in full the conditions of a lawful consecration. What need had he to say this of a mere Presbyter? or of any but those who claimed consecration as Bishops? There is no mention of Presbyter in the whole epistle. Now it is as plain as any conjecture can be that these *pseudo-epis-*

ted, as in Timothy and Titus, to Bishops. St. Chrysostom calls "the power of ordination the chiefest of all, and that which above all holds the Church together."¹ It was for this reason that it was reserved to Timothy over Ephesus and the subject churches, and to Titus over Crete with its hundred cities.

What St. Cyprian observes on the commission given copi were Chorepiscopi, who were consecrated not as the provincial bishops, in the full canonical order recited by St. Leo, but by one bishop. This practice, which had grown into the churches in Gaul, was severely reprehended by Damasus, Leo, John III., and Leo III. These Chorepiscopi were consecrated by the Diocesan Bishops to help them in their labours; but so that they should not confirm or ordain without express consent given to that effect by the bishop of the diocese. To this Leo alludes (*consensu et judicio Præsidentium*). The Chorepiscopi by degrees violated this restriction to such an extent as to bring on their entire suppression. And the office of Presbyter Chorepiscopus, or Archdeacon, prevailed in their stead. Now, writing of these Chorepiscopi, John III. says, "All the chief councils affirm that he is no Bishop who is made Bishop by fewer than three Bishops, with the authority of the Metropolitan; and therefore that those whom you call Chorepiscopi, inasmuch as they are consecrated as we hear by one Bishop, are no Bishops, and ought not to assume any sacred function of the pontifical (episcopal) privileges." Morinus de Sacr. Ord. ad Exercit. iv. c. ii. 8. These are exactly the pseudo-episcopi of St. Leo. Their consecration was real, by apostolical authority, and therefore their ordination was not to be iterated; but their consecration was uncanonical, and therefore every episcopal act was usurpation except "*consensu et judicio Præsidentium*." They were then, or by after-submission of the party ordained, valid, and accepted by the Diocesan Bishop. That this is St. Leo's meaning is beyond a doubt; and his letter, having no reference to simple Presbyters, is irrelevant to the end for which Stillingfleet adduced it.

¹ "πάντων μάλιστα κυριώτατον, καὶ ὃ μάλιστα συνέχει τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν, τὸ τῶν χειροτονιῶν." Vindic. Ignat. c. xiii.

first to St. Peter alone is true also here. The source and springhead of power began from one as a type and pledge of unity. That the preservation of unity was the final end of the Episcopate, St. Jerome again and again asserts, as for instance, in his dialogue with the Luciferians, where he argues, "The safety of the Church hangs upon the dignity of the chief priest, to whom if there were not given a power extraordinary and above other men, there would be made as many schisms as there are priests."¹ And he proceeds further, in the above-cited Epistle to Evangelus, to give an account of the first rise of the Episcopate: "That one was afterwards chosen out and set over the rest was done as a corrective of schism, lest every man, drawing Christ's Church to himself, should rend it."² And in his commentary on the Epistle to Titus, he says, "A Presbyter is the same as a Bishop, and before that, by the instigation of the Devil, factions were made in religion, and it was said among the people, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, the churches were governed by the common council of the Presbyters. But after that each one regarded those he had baptized, not as Christ's, but as his own, it was decreed in all the world that one chosen out from among the Presbyters should be set over the rest, to whom

¹ Morinus de Ordinat. Sacr. P. iii. c. ii. 3. See also S. Cypr. Ep. 55.

² Ad Evangelum, tom. v. p. 803. ed. Ben.

should belong the charge of the whole Church, and thereby the seeds of schism be rooted out.”¹

Now upon this passage it must be observed that, if taken to deny the Apostolical institution of the Episcopate, it is *gratis dictum*; having no warrant of history: it is a theory inconsistent with the teaching of the three first ages after the Apostles; and with the plain declarations of Holy Scripture, which prove that the sole power of Timothy and Titus was given by the Apostle himself.

In the next place, it is said that this universal rule of electing a single Presbyter to be Bishop arose upon the schisms of the Church. That is to say, the Apostles acted not by foresight and prevention, but by after-judgment, to correct an evil which was both foreseen and foretold. How far this is consonant with the Divine wisdom, by which they were guided, any plain man will readily decide; and how far it is consonant with the evidence of history may be seen from the fact that the schisms of which Jerome speaks, at Corinth, arose about A.D. 55, which is the date of St. Paul's Epistle, and we already find St. James at Jerusalem, presiding over the Presbyters of that Church, and, according to Eusebius, Euodius at Antioch, who was made Bishop in the year A.D. 44.² Now whether the testimony of Eusebius is intrinsically valid is no question. It is at least good against that of St. Jerome, nay even

¹ S. Hierom. in Tit. i. 5.

² By the Chronology of Syncellus, A.D. 40.

better, as are all detailed testimonies against sweeping assertions ; and certainly it is more trustworthy on other grounds, Eusebius being more than half a century earlier, an Asiatic Greek, and himself bishop of a neighbouring city.

The fact is that this precedence, from what cause soever it arose, existed before the schisms which Jerome imagined to have produced it.¹ The successions of the churches of Jerusalem and Antioch are older than the Epistle to the Corinthians.

And lastly, I would observe that Jerome says "*toto orbe decretum*"—it was decreed in the whole world. In his commentary on Titus, he says: "As Presbyters know that they are subject to him that is set over them by the custom of the Church (*ecclesiæ consuetudine*), so let Bishops know that they are greater than Presbyters, rather by custom than by the nature of the Lord's dispensation." But he immediately destroys his argument by a parallel between Moses and the seventy Elders. Surely Moses had both supreme power and precedence "*dispositionis Dominicæ veritate*." But Jerome says this was an universal custom, and begun in the course of the apostolic ministry, and, therefore, he must mean by the Apostles: yet his words, "decreed in the whole world," give it an appearance as if it were the act, not of inspired, but uninspired men.² If it

¹ Morinus de Ord. Sacr. P. iii. c. 3. 20.

² In the same Epistle to Evangelus, St. Jerome makes the following statement, which has been eagerly used by the gainsayers

was so decreed, let the decree be produced. Or if it be not forthcoming, let us rather listen to St. Augustin, who, while Jerome was thus writing from the east, taught another and a sounder rule in Africa. "What the whole Church holds, instituted by no council, but always maintained, is most rightly believed to flow from no authority but that of the

of the Episcopal order:—"At Alexandria, from the time of Mark the Evangelist to the Bishops Heraclas and Dionysius, the Presbyters were always wont to choose one out of their own number and place him in a higher grade, and call him Bishop, as the army makes the Emperor; and the Deacons choose of their own number one whose diligence they know, and call him Archdeacon. For what does a Bishop do that a Presbyter may not, except ordain? &c." From this it has been argued that by election, and without consecration, a Presbyter became Bishop of Alexandria; which is contrary to the whole current of historical testimony. Even Morinus is led to suppose this to be Jerome's meaning, because no ecclesiastical ceremony was used in the consecration of emperors for some centuries after Jerome's day. His argument would then be this: because the emperors were not consecrated before the practice of consecrating them was instituted, therefore neither were Bishops, though the practice of consecrating them was universal and from the beginning. But in truth Morinus has missed St. Jerome's meaning. He compares the two elections, not the consequent ceremonies. All he had to show was that Presbyters border so closely on the Episcopate, that they had the right of choosing their own bishop. In fact it is no more than is possessed by most churches of Western Europe at this day. But his own words show this, for whence could the elected Bishop obtain the power of ordination, which the Presbyters themselves did not possess? The truth is, he had no need to speak of consecration, and therefore wholly omits it. Moreover it is recorded that St. Mark ordained Anianus or Ananias to the see of Alexandria; and that the Patriarch of that church was consecrated by the neighbouring bishops from time immemorial. See Hammond, Diss. quatuor quibus Episcopatus Jura &c. iii. x. Works, vol. iii. 792.

Apostles.”¹ This universal fact of an episcopal regimen can be explained by no cause short of an uni-

¹ Much stress is laid by those who deny the apostolical institution of orders upon the following passage of Tertullian, in which he is supposed to reduce the priesthood of the Church to a matter of internal ecclesiastical discipline. “Are not we laymen also priests? It is written—‘He hath made us a kingdom, and priests unto God and His Father.’ The difference between the order (of Priests) and the people is constituted by the authority of the Church; and the dignity which is in the consistory of the priesthood is sanctified; insomuch that where the consistory and the ecclesiastical order is not found, thou makest oblation, and baptizest, and art a priest unto thyself alone. But where three are, although they be laymen, there is the Church.” *De Exhort. castitatis*, c. vii.

Now a slight regard to the context will clear this difficulty. In recommending chastity he falls on the subject of second marriages. He says they are forbidden to the priesthood. He supposes an objector to say, “Therefore it is lawful to others whom he excepts. Sed dices, ergo cæteris licet, quos excipit,” *i. e.*, the laity. He answers, “We are foolish if we fancy that what is not lawful for priests is lawful for laymen. Are not we laymen also priests?” &c.

First, then, it is plain that Tertullian means to refute the idea that in the nature of morals there are two rules, one for priests, another for laymen. He contends that all moral beings, before God, are alike.

Next he teaches that the standing priesthood is an expression, or embodying, of the spiritual actions of the whole body.

And lastly, by “*Ecclesiæ auctoritas*,” he clearly means to include the apostolic as much as Jerome does in the “*Ecclesiæ consuetudo*,” and “*toto orbe decretum*.”

All that Tertullian is concerned to show is that the difference between the laity and priesthood has a *positive* and not a *moral* origin—that it is not a *differentia per se*, but a *differentia ex constituto*.

For the last words “Where three are, &c.,” see St. Cyprian de Unitate, “*Dominus enim cum discipulis suis unitatem suaderet, &c.*” p. 198. ed. Ben. He means that the Church resides even in its ultimate integral parts, however small.

And last of all it must be remembered that Tertullian’s book de

versal agency, which was harmonious and alike in every place. We know of none such since the mission of the Apostles. They that gainsay must account for it.¹

We may now sum up the evidence of Scripture on this point. It is plain that the Lord Jesus Christ himself ordained his Apostles, and that the Apostles ordained Deacons to be their first assistants; that in a few years, without any mention of their institution, a body of Presbyters is found in the Church, subject to the Apostles, sometimes to one Apostle: that to these Presbyters the sole power *Exhort. castitatis* was written after he had turned Montanist, and committed schism. See Bishop of Lincoln's Tertullian, p. 62.

¹ For those who have an impression that the Apostles did not institute the government by Bishops, but that uninspired men after the Apostles' times introduced it, the following passage from Chillingworth fairly puts an argument which I have never seen as fairly met. "When I shall see, therefore, all the Fables of the Metamorphosis acted, and prove true stories; when I shall see all the democracies and aristocracies in the world lie down and sleep and awake into monarchies; then will I begin to believe that Presbyterial government, having continued in the Church during the Apostles' time, should presently after (against the Apostles' doctrine, and the will of Christ) be whirled about like a scene in a mask, and transformed into Episcopacy. In the meantime, while these things remain thus incredible, and, in human reason, impossible, I hope I shall have leave to conclude thus:

"Episcopal government is acknowledged to have been universally received in the Church presently after the Apostles' times.

"Between the Apostles' times and this 'presently after' there was not time enough for any possibility of so great an alteration.

"And therefore there was no such alteration as is pretended; and therefore Episcopacy being confessed to be so ancient and Catholic, must be granted also to be Apostolic. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*" The Apostolical Instit. of Episcopacy, Works, 490. ii.

of ordaining, and ruling the Church, was never given; that to Timothy and Titus both of these functions were committed severally and in full; that we once read of Presbyters joining subordinately with St. Paul in an act of ordination; that we nowhere read of their taking any such act as a body without an Apostle; and, lastly, that we find, in two or three passages, the name "Bishop" apparently given to them.

From all these premises we may conclude, first, that so long as the power of ruling and ordaining was restrained in the hands of the Apostles, they may have acted as Curators of the several Churches by a sort of vicarious Episcopate—an office still assigned to Cathedral Presbyteries in the Catholic Church during the vacancy of any see. If I may so say, the Episcopate in its lower functions, *for we nowhere read of their ordaining*, was put into commission: they were none of them severally Bishops, as Timothy and Titus, but all together exercised such functions of the Episcopate as they were severally capable of. They may have therefore partaken of the name, as, "*sede nondum constitutâ*," they did of the authority.

Secondly, we may conclude that the power of ordaining and of ruling the Church was nowhere committed to more than one alone. The Apostles, as they possessed the fulness of their divine commission in themselves, so they gave out portions of it, according to the needs of the Church; and the

rest they retained in their own hands, until they made provision for their departure from the Church on earth by bequeathing the whole Apostolic authority to their successors. Therefore we find, first, an order of assistants with powers very limited; namely, the Deacons.

And next in order, with powers much enlarged, taking precedence of the Deacons, joining in the councils of the Church, and all but equal to the Apostles, to whom, however, they are always found in a carefully expressed subordination, we find a body of Presbyters.

The Presbyters, therefore, were the material or basis of the future Episcopate. Bishops were not needed so long as the Apostles themselves kept the oversight of all Churches;¹ and, therefore, in the early history of the Church, as contained in the Book of Acts, we have no record of the act of instituting a bishopric. As the time drew on for the departure of the Apostles, they were constituted, as at Jerusalem; and therefore it is to the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, St. Paul's latest writings, that we must look for the form to which the Churches of his planting had grown up under his hand. He had reared the temple to the coping stone, and then, as the last act, he fixed the pinnacle. He was to depart from them, and he left Timothy and Titus as his representatives. And this brings me to the last point I shall touch upon. In

¹ Morinus de Sacris Ordin. P. iii. c. iii. 15.

thus committing the plenitude of their authority to one, and only one in each Church, it is evident that the Apostles acted upon the rule which our Lord himself had sanctioned by His own practice. As a type of unity, he first committed the Apostolic power to St. Peter,¹ but afterwards to all the

¹ It is as certain that the precedence of the Church of Rome has no divine or apostolical warrant, as that St. Peter had a precedence among the Apostles by the implied disposition of our Lord. No one who has examined Holy Scripture and the Fathers of the Church can doubt of this; but the real question is not whether or no he had a precedence, which all well-instructed divines admit, but in what that precedence consisted. Whatsoever that precedence was, it was a precedence among those who had received equal power with himself. The same testimonies which ascribe to him a precedence, assert everywhere with greater strength and point the equality of all the Apostles.

It is evident from Holy Scripture that the precedence of St. Peter was a priority in point of time. He first confessed Christ to be the Son of God, and he first received the promise of the apostolic power. St. Matth. xvi. 16—19. But they all received it afterwards. St. John xx. 21, 22, 23. He first opened the apostolic commission at the appointment of Matthias, and at the day of Pentecost opened the kingdom of Heaven to the Jews, and at the conversion of Cornelius to the Gentiles. To him was committed "the gospel of the circumcision," Gal. ii. 7; *i. e.* the office and ministry of tendering the Gospel to the Jews. Throughout Judæa and Asia and in every place this was first done, and a foundation of Jewish converts laid, on which the Gentile converts were afterwards built. Thus the ministry of St. Peter came first, that of St. Paul came afterwards, and we find in the Book of Acts that the preaching of St. Peter is recorded down to the conversion of Cornelius. Then follows the preaching of St. Paul. The whole Church, therefore, is built on the Gospel of the Circumcision, the ministry of St. Peter, and so on St. Peter himself. The interpretation of the words of Christ in Matth. xvi. 18, was very various in the Catholic Church. St. Augustin interpreted the Rock either of Peter or of Christ, and invites the reader to make his

ness of the Godhead, cleaves together with heavenly sacraments, can be rent asunder in the Church, and separated by the divorce of clashing wills? This house and resting-place of unanimity the Holy Ghost designs and declares in the Psalms, saying, 'God also makes men to be of one mind in one house.' In the house of God, in the Church of Christ, they who are of one mind dwell, and they who are of one and a single heart persevere."¹ St. Augustin, speaking of the Church, says, "The peace of a family is the well-ordered concord of rule and obedience in them that dwell together: the peace of a city the well-ordered concord of rule and obedience in the citizens. The peace of the Heavenly City is the fellowship of perfect order and concord in the enjoyment of God, and of each other in God."²

But in a matter so fully known and acknowledged on all hands, it is not needful to do more than sketch in outline the nature of this moral unity.

It consists, then, of two great elements: subordination and charity—*i. e.*, subordination of Christians to their lawful pastors, and charity towards their brethren in Christ. These two moral elements make up the internal unity of Churches. "They continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers." Such is the outline of the primary form

¹ De Unit. Eccl. pp. 195, 196. ² De Civ. Dei, lib. xix. 13.

of Christian unity. In the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship we have the faith and polity, the doctrine and discipline, as explained in the foregoing part of this chapter: in the breaking of bread and in prayers, the moral unity of charity and worship, which is the subject of this.

The "*plebs sacerdoti adunata*" is the first condition; the reciprocal union of all members of the flock is the second; and these make up the moral unity of every section of the Church. In the union of pastors with each other, and with their Bishop, consists the unity of a diocesan Church. In like manner, in the union of many diocesan Churches throughout the several ecclesiastical distributions of jurisdiction, and of all Churches throughout the whole world, consists the moral unity of subordination to the successors of the Apostles, and of charity with all members in the mystical body of Christ.

Such being the nature of this moral unity, we may shortly state also in what way it is secured and ascertained.

The central point of unity is the communion of the blessed Eucharist, in which Christian men cherish as well as testify subordination and charity to their pastor and his flock; and though the members of the several Churches cannot—because of their primary duty to maintain the first conditions of unity with their own pastor, and also because of remoteness of place and diversity of language—except in certain cases, hold actual communion with the members of

other Churches, yet the sacrifice and sacrament of the blessed Eucharist being one and the same in all places, the very act of oblation and communion is actual unity with all branches of the Church.

The Eucharist of the whole Church Catholic is one Eucharist. "We being many are one bread." "In which very sacrament is represented the natural union of our people: for in like manner as many grains gathered, and ground, and mingled in one make one bread, so in Christ, who is the heavenly Bread, we know there is one body to which our multitude is joined and united."¹ And thus, as by one act, all Churches, from the rising to the setting of the sun, have communion with each other, through one and the same sacrifice, in the Court of Heaven.

But, besides this virtual communion, all Churches may testify their moral unity by communicatory letters, whether on matters of public discipline or of private interest. Those of public discipline are such as communicate to other Bishops the consecration of any to a vacant see; or again, the deposition and degradation of pastors, or the excommunication of members of any Church: for these are matters of public concern, all Churches being equally bound to ratify and to act upon any decision or sentence duly and justly pronounced by lawful authority: any man excommunicated in one Church being excommunicated in all, and any man absolved in one being absolved in all.

¹ S. Cypr. Ep. 63.

The communicatory letters of a private sort are those that relate to aids and alms sent to any particular Church in its emergencies; or letters, credential and testimonial, affirming the character and quality of any member of a Church to any or to all other Churches into the communion of which he may seek admission.¹

Another mode of securing and expressing this moral unity is in the practice of holding Synods and Councils, diocesan or general, for common deliberation and definition; and in the unanimous reception and execution of canons and decrees.

The moral unity of the Church, therefore, consists in a communion of all Churches in worship and practice, in friendly intercourse and correspondence, and in all judicial, deliberative, and executive acts.

At the outset of this chapter we proposed to examine in what the unity of the visible portion of the Church consists; and it is now time that we should sum up the result of the inquiry, and bring this part of the subject to an end.

We have found it to consist partly of a definite form of doctrine and discipline delivered to mankind by Christ and his Apostles, and partly of the

¹ "For this was, of old, the glory of the Church, that, from one end of the world to the other, the brethren of each several Church, furnished for their journey with a small symbol, found all to be Fathers and Brethren." S. Basil. Ep. 191.

So Tertullian: "Probant unitatem communicatio pacis, et appellatio fraternitatis, et contesseratio hospitalitatis." De præsc. Hær. xx.

In this is the communion between Churches as sister churches for brotherly

relation and order subsisting among those who received it. We have called these the organic and moral, or the objective and subjective unity of the Church: the organic or objective unity being the identity of the church of any age with the church of the Apostles in the faith and sacraments, and in the commission received from Christ, and transmitted by lawful succession: the moral or subjective unity being oneness of communion internally among the several members of each church, and externally among the several churches throughout the world.

CONCLUSION.

WE have now completed the first part of the subject before us. It is of importance, however, that we should make some remarks upon the form, as distinguished from the matter, of the argument which has been used in the foregoing chapters, before we pass on to the second part.

It was not necessary to prove that there exists, among Christians, a doctrine of unity. The only question to be examined was concerning the nature and limitations of that doctrine. It is evidently, therefore, a question not of speculation, or of opinion, but of *fact*; and as a question of fact it is to be decided by external or historical evidence. The truth or falsehood of the doctrine in question is, if I may so speak, accidental to this inquiry. We have to ascertain what is, and has been from the beginning, the belief of Christians respecting the unity of the Church. Now, in seeking for an answer to this question we are necessarily constrained to go to the written documents of the most primitive times. The first and most obvious, as being in the hands and mouths of all Christians, is the Catholic creed. We were compelled, therefore, to ascertain the an-

tiquity of the article which declares the unity of the Church.

But as this article is capable of many apparent interpretations, it was necessary to ascertain in what sense it was interpreted by the Church in the beginning. We were, therefore, compelled a second time to consult the written documents, partly as interpreters and partly as witnesses; and these documents we find of two sorts, inspired and uninspired. In one sense, it is plainly impossible to treat the subject as a question of simple history from the time that the inspired Scriptures are intermingled with the evidence. They not only attest the historical fact, but also the truth of any doctrine.

At the same time it must be observed, that in this inquiry I have adduced Holy Scripture also as historical evidence. I have not felt myself at liberty as yet to use any arguments, or any form of argument, except that which is strictly and simply of an historical and external sort; and for this reason: There either was or was not a doctrine of unity taught by the Apostles. If there was, that doctrine must be found in their own writings, and in the writings and teaching of their successors. The question then is one of history. I have endeavoured to exhibit the doctrine as it is to be found in the primitive records; but I have carefully abstained from touching on the probable moral design, or final end of this dispensation, and also from all explanation or reply to objections which might seem to lie

against it in its consequences. These we shall consider hereafter. At present we have dealt with the subject as a question of fact; and if I have drawn the foregoing proofs from trustworthy documents, and correctly gathered the sense of the testimonies, I do not see how any one can refuse the conclusion—that the doctrine of Catholic unity as here exhibited is derived from the Apostles of Christ. I wish this to be the more carefully noted, because, in almost every case I am aware of, the objections of controversialists, and the difficulties of simpler minds, are to be found either in the form of *a priori* assumptions as to the nature of unity, or of untenable consequences which are supposed to follow from the doctrine above stated: as, for instance—It is alleged that God would not tie up His redeeming grace to any mere form; or that, if He has, then all who are without it must be in extreme peril, if not certainly lost. Of the intrinsic inconclusiveness of these two forms of objection we shall have to speak in another place. At present it is only necessary to remark that, when brought in reply to positive evidence of fact, they are simply *irrelevant*. I do not say that objections may not be brought against the statements already made in this work; but I may say that no objections will be relevant, except such as will show either that the *sense* of the testimonies adduced has been incorrectly given, or, if correctly, that the *testimonies* are themselves without weight.

many of our words doubtful several have been supposed without instance St. Augustin others in very few
When the fact is doubtful is not

PART II.

THE MORAL DESIGN OF CATHOLIC UNITY.

CHAPTER I.

THE MORAL DESIGN OF THE CHURCH AS SHOWN BY HOLY SCRIPTURE.

INTRODUCTION.

IN the foregoing part of this work I have brought forward the evidence to prove that God, by a direct act of revelation and appointment, has ordained one visible body, compacted into one visible form or polity, which is His Church. Thus far we have considered only the fact, and not the reason—only the positive appointment, and not the moral design. As we have therefore found external evidence to convince us that God has thus ordered His Church, the next step is for us to inquire *why* He has done so.

That all the works of God are pointed, by His perfect wisdom, at some end, is an axiom as inseparable from the reason of man as the idea of God Himself. We need therefore only to inquire *what* is the aim or end of the Divine wisdom in the institution

of His Church. In seeking an answer to this question, it is plain that we are not at liberty to form to ourselves *a priori* conceptions of His design. We are so greatly ignorant of the intrinsic nature of the Divine Mind, of the extent of the causes which have brought mankind to their present state, of the condition of man as viewed in combination with the whole scheme of God's universe, of the laws and conditions which govern the invisible world, of the nature of evil, and death, and will, and of all other mysteries and realities which make up the constitution of man, and his relation to God, that we cannot, without presumption, venture upon a conjecture, antecedently to examining the express revelation of God, as to the final cause and great moral design of the particular mode in which He has been pleased to cast the economy of our redemption. This is not said as if any of the purposes of God could be for a moment opposed to the pure reason and conscience of His creatures. Let reason and conscience, unclouded by the passions, and the prejudice of a secret leaning, be fairly left to work, and they will be found to issue in a perfect harmony with the Mind from which they have their being. But there is no part of theology in which men are guilty of more unfairness than in the investigation of final causes. Minds at other times the most equitable are, in such examinations, found to be warped and biassed. Some early prejudice, some collateral effect, some foreseen conse-

quence from this or that particular opinion, or some contrariety to the preference of their own minds, will make them either wholly reject or even refuse to examine into the plainest appointment of God. "It is indeed a matter of great patience to reasonable men to find people arguing in this manner: objecting against the credibility of such particular things revealed in Scripture that they do not see the necessity or expediency of them. For though it is highly right, and the most pious exercise of our understanding, to inquire, with due reverence, into the ends and reasons of God's dispensations, yet, when these reasons are concealed, to argue from our ignorance, that such dispensations cannot be from God, is infinitely absurd. The presumption of this kind of objections seems almost lost in the folly of them; and the folly of them is yet greater when they are urged, as usually they are, against things in Christianity, analogous or like to those natural dispensations of Providence which are matter of experience. Let reason be kept to, and if any part of the Scripture account of the redemption of the world by Christ can be shown to be really contrary to it, let the Scripture, in the name of God, be given up; but let not such poor creatures as we go on objecting against an infinite scheme that we do not see the necessity or usefulness of all its parts, and call this reasoning."¹

In seeking, then, for the great moral purposes

¹ Bishop Butler's Analogy, p. 311.

of God in the institution of His visible Church, we shall run the least risk of falling into the danger of private speculations if we keep ourselves exclusively to what God has Himself taught us of His own designs. We shall therefore take the grounds of our reasoning, in this chapter, from Holy Scripture alone.

1. And first, it is, on all hands, confessed that the final and highest end in which all the works and ways of God conspire and rest is His own glory. This we may learn of the heavenly hosts, whom the beloved disciple heard saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."¹ But in speaking of God's glory we may more easily offend, with St. Peter on the Mount of Transfiguration, than speak aright; for "we wot not what to say." Nevertheless, what God has revealed of Himself we may with open face behold. The making, then, of this world was for his own glory. He had delight to project, as it were, the idea of His own wisdom before His holy sight; and out of the deep of His own Being to breathe the host of several beings which no eye but His may number. And as all was very good, so each several being, living or lifeless, was as a luminous point giving back the glory of the Eternal wisdom, and the whole universe of God as a mirror, faultless and blessed, on which the image of the Everlasting lay in a holy

¹ Rev. iv. 11.

rest. So the heavens declared God's glory, and the earth was filled with it, in the day when "the morning stars sung together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

And that which was the final end of God's almighty work in the making of the world is likewise His highest end in its redemption. For what is it but the making again of His first works out of the void and formless matter of a fallen world? And yet even so His work shall doubtless rise and terminate in a higher perfection than before. That the glory of God is the end and aim of man's redemption, Holy Scripture everywhere teaches; and this also the angelic song which was heard in heaven on the same night that the Saviour of man was born, when the multitude of the celestial choir sang glory to God in the highest, sufficiently declares. And we see this, too, in what His prophets and apostles have testified: as Isaiah that heard the seraphim, by the altar of sacrifice, cry, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory:"¹ and as the Lord Himself declared, "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another."² And of the gathering of His redeemed people we read, "I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. . . . Fear not, for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west: I will

¹ Isaiah vi. 3.

² Isaiah xlii. 7.

say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back : bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name, for I have created him for my glory.”¹ And in like manner the apostles teach us that we were “chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love : having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace :”² that in Christ all the promises of God “are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”³ “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”⁴ “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father.”⁵ And this glory was not manifested to us only, but the whole working out “of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who hath created all things by Jesus Christ,” was foreordained “to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God.”⁶ Even they who by the

¹ Isaiah xliii. 3, 5, 6, 7.² Eph. i. 4, 5, 6.³ 2 Cor. i. 20.⁴ 2 Cor. iv. 6.⁵ St. John i. 14.⁶ Eph. iii. 9, 10.

most direct intuition see the brightness of the Everlasting, have ever more and more of a deeper lore to learn by the evolving characters of God's mysterious hand. The Church, even to angels, is the book of God's wisdom, and the mirror of His glory. It must further be noted that this final end of God's works and ways is nevertheless so nigh to every redeemed man as to be also the final end of all his actions. "Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."¹ "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."²

It is not, however, necessary to multiply proofs of a point which no man is concerned to deny. It is evident not only from revelation, but from natural reason, and the testimony of conscience, that all God's works and ways, in creation and redemption, in mercy and in power, and all His mysterious economy with His Church and people, by the ministry of apostles, and prophets and angels, and of His only begotten Son, all begin and end, as a circle returns into itself, in His own incommunicable glory. This then is the chiefest and highest final cause of all.

2. But there are also ends subordinate, and mediate to the highest and last of all; and these too we must touch on.

The first and necessary means to the manifestation of God's glory is the manifestation of His

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 20.

² 1 Cor. x. 31.

nature and character. We may say that the chief among subordinate ends to which all the works and ways of God in the redemption of mankind have been directed is the restoration of a true knowledge of Himself; or, in other words, the chief end of the Church is the restoration to the world of a true knowledge of God. This is so evident throughout the whole of Scripture as to need no proof. From the beginning of the positive institution of His Church, the foundation-stone has been, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord;"¹ and the first of His commandments, "I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have no other gods before me:"² and so highly did God esteem of this chief doctrine of His Church, that He fenced it with the most fearful of all His warnings: "The Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God."³ This was the rock of the elder, as the Sonship of Christ is of the later Church. So St. Paul teaches us that the wickedness of man lay in this: "Because that when they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened: professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of

¹ Deut. vi. 4.² Exod. xx. 2, 3.³ Deut. iv. 24.

their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator who is blessed for ever. Amen."¹ "After that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God; it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe:"² as also St. Paul said at Athens, "As I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar, with this inscription, 'To the unknown God.' Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."³ We have here in the person of St. Paul, as it were, a symbol of God's Church in the world, its mission, and its message. Let this suffice for the Scriptural proof that the restoration of the true knowledge of God to the world is the chief of all the subordinate ends of the Church.

3. The next end of the institution of the Church is the restoration of man to the image of God. If it should seem that this end ought to have been placed before the last, I must beg the reader to consider the following points. First, that the restoration of the true knowledge of God is a means to the restoration of man to his image. And next, that whatsoever be the event of this revelation of Himself to His creatures, His name shall be glorified. The glory of the Lord was in the pillar which stood between the hosts, although the Egyptians were overwhelmed in the sea, and the Israelites fell in

¹ Rom. i. 20, 25.² 1 Cor. i. 21.³ Acts xvii. 23.

the wilderness. St. Paul also says, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ; and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge to us in every place. We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish. To the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life."¹ The restoration of the true knowledge of God is an end broader and higher, and deeper than the salvation of Saints: for it is also the condemnation of the ungodly, and the light which for judgment has entered into the whole world.² And, lastly, we do not know what purpose of God it may fulfil in the transcendent system of His creatures, of which our world is but a part.

The great mystery of man's restoration to the image of God, like the mystery of his fall, runs through the whole of Scripture. It is more than stated; it is assumed everywhere; it is one of the great moral axioms on which all the word of God is based. Sayings, at first sight remote, will be found to be full of it. "God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him."³ "How can he be clean that is born of a woman?"⁴ "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."⁵ Our Lord declared it when He said "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."⁶ And St.

¹ 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.

² St. John iii. 19, 20, 21.

³ Gen. i. 27.

⁴ Job xxv. 4; 5.

⁵ Ps. li. 5.

⁶ St. John x. 10.

John: "Now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see him as He is."¹ And St. Paul: "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory as by the spirit of the Lord."² He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body."³ "By man came death; by man came also the resurrection of the dead: as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."⁴ "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy such are they that are earthy, and as is the heavenly such are they also that are heavenly; and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."⁵ "Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son."⁶ "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was

¹ St. John, 1st Ep. iii. 2., ² 2 Cor. iii. 18.

³ Phil. iii. 21. ⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. ⁵ 1 Cor. xv. 42—49.

⁶ Rom. viii. 29.

made subject to vanity not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit the redemption of our body."¹ For he hath made us "partakers of the Divine nature;"² and "the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."³ The regeneration⁴ therefore of all His works, the reconstituting of all things under a new head;⁵ that is to say, the perfection of His creature, the restoration of man in body, soul, and spirit to the image of God, in which he was made at the beginning, is another subordinate end in the series of final causes for which his Church was ordained.

4. But there is also another still more proximate to us; and that is the probation of man's moral nature. It is not simply the restoration of man to the image of God, but his restoration under a certain law and condition that God has willed. The frame of this visible world shall melt with fervent heat, and we know not whether or no the Everlasting may be pleased to recast its fused elements into a

¹ Rom. viii. 19, 23.

² 2 Pet. i. 4.

³ St. Matth. xiii. 43.

⁴ St. Matthew.

⁵ Ephes. i. 10.